

PCP Forum 38/2022: Water and the Protection of Cultural Property

Carine Simoes: Editorial. Water and the Protection of Cultural Property	2
Reto Nussbaumer: The Baths of Baden – Reflections across the centuries.	2
Moritz Flury-Rova: Bathing establishments in the Canton of St Gallen and neighbouring territories... 2	
Christophe Valentini: Dams in the Canton of Valais.	3
Andreas Mäder: Pile dwellings in Lake Zurich – Protection of cultural heritage and site management.	3
Jürgen Trumm, Rahel Göldi: Old aqueducts for the legionary camp of Vindonissa and Königsfelden Abbey.	3
Armand Baeriswyl: Water supply and disposal in medieval and early modern towns: The example of Berne.....	4
Sonja Hablützel: Saving valuable cultural property on Lake Lucerne.	4
Isabelle Burkhalter: Maritime creatures at the Musée d’Art et d’Histoire, Geneva.	5
Gaëtan Morard, Mathieu Paul Aymon: The irrigation channels of Valais.	5

Carine Simoes: Editorial. Water and the Protection of Cultural Property

Dear reader,

Water is a fascinating element! Without it, no life on Earth would be possible. The human body consists largely of water, it surrounds us on all sides and is part of the history of civilizations and of our cultural heritage. Since the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, World Water Day has been observed each year on 22 March. It is an opportunity for UN member states and all parties concerned to celebrate the basic right of access to water as well as to recall the challenges of sustainable water resource management.

A closer look at Switzerland's PCP Inventory reveals the manifold ways in which our cultural heritage is connected to water. Issue 38 of the *PCP Forum* magazine dives into the topic of water in connection with Protection of Cultural Property, looking primarily at its positive aspects. It presents cultural property of national significance from the fields of archaeology, mythology, architectural heritage, tourism, and leisure. Emergencies, such as those related to flooding or extreme weather events, on the other hand, will be covered in a future issue dedicated to climate change.

With this issue, *PCP Forum* magazine presents itself in its new, fresh and colourful design. We wish you an enjoyable read!

Reto Nussbaumer: The Baths of Baden – Reflections across the centuries.

Often, the names of cities are descriptive – and none more so than that of Baden in Canton Aargau: For 2000 years, visitors have bathed in Baden's warm, intensely sulfurous thermal springs.

Through the ages, from *Aquae Helveticae* – as the Roman vicus that once stood in the modern-day spa quarter was called – to the medieval edifices and the current baths with the latest wellness spa FORTYSEVEN, countless builders, architects, craftspeople and artisans shaped and designed the area around the Limmat's river bend. Buildings were erected, refurbished, expanded, combined, supplemented with additional floors... in short: the architectural history of the spa hotels is a complex one.

And throughout the centuries, numerous authors were inspired to write about the equally complex customs and practices associated with bathing, and with the associated journey to Baden.

Moritz Flury-Rova: Bathing establishments in the Canton of St Gallen and neighbouring territories.

This ramble through the many baths of the Canton of St Gallen is a journey through topography and architectural history, but in particular through medical and social history.

From the spas situated near hot springs, it takes us to the baths that were built for hygienic purposes in the expanding cities of the 19th century and finally to the demand for light, sunshine and physical exercise as articulated by the *Lebensreform* movement.

Accordingly, the architecture changes from the cloistered bathhouse via the playful *fin-de-siècle* facilities to the reform architecture and the work of the *Neues Bauen* movement.

Thankfully, outstanding examples from all these epochs have survived and are today protected objects of widespread appreciation.

Christophe Valentini: Dams in the Canton of Valais.

The 2014 publication of an inventory of modern architecture in the Canton of Valais dating from 1920 to 1975 (*Architecture du XX^e en Valais*) facilitated a survey of the full extent of our canton's development since the end of the Second World War. The concrete edifices gave rise to a modern and international Valais that displaced regional and traditional movements. The new building material enabled the construction of the first works of art, and especially of dams. Most of the world's dams are constructed to secure power and water supply.

In Switzerland, they were – at least initially – built mainly for electricity generation, in particular for the electrification of the nation's railway network. A network of high-altitude structures was built to allow the hydroelectric stations in the lowlands to generate power. The building of the dams and the size of these colossal construction sites, which were maintained for several years at altitudes of over 2000 meters, fostered an unprecedented development in the canton, both in the lowlands and in the mountains.

Valais has more than 50 dams, which supply water to power over 260 hydroelectric plants. As an ensemble, these infrastructures represent a cultural legacy that is one of the most typical landmarks in the Canton of Valais.

Andreas Mäder: Pile dwellings in Lake Zurich – Protection of cultural heritage and site management.

Since the 1960^s, Zurich Underwater Archaeology has been inventorising, documenting, researching and protecting underwater cultural heritage objects. These are mainly discovery sites of pile dwellings that since 2022 are part of the *Prehistoric pile dwellings around the Alps* UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Switzerland's ratification of the *Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage* is an important statement that contributes to public awareness regarding the value of underwater cultural heritage. The pile dwelling sites are severely endangered and must be protected; to this end, the material archaeological record is assessed and documented as far as possible. Subsequently, protection measures are implemented, e.g., by covering up open cultural layers. Achieving sustainable protection and synergies with the various stakeholders dealing with the lakeshores (e.g., environmental protection agencies) requires clear foundations and strategies based on detailed holistic inventories.

Hazard analyses and erosion forecasts are generated using 3D models of cultural layers, hydrodynamic measurements and wind wave modeling. In this way, especially threatened discovery sites can be identified. Such models are of great importance for assessment, prognostics and management of underwater sites with a view to future measures.

Jürgen Trumm, Rahel Göldi: Old aqueducts for the legionary camp of Vindonissa and Königsfelden Abbey.

The Aargau towns of Windisch and Hausen are home to special historic treasures – two old brick water conduits from the Roman era, one of which was rediscovered and refurbished in the early

14th century and remains intact to this day. Not only is it the only *aquaeductus* from antiquity north of the Alps to be preserved along nearly its entire length, it even remains serviceable.

For decades, the archaeological department of the Canton of Aargau has been caring for the two monuments, including inventory-taking, refurbishment and legal protection. This will ensure that “Roman” water will continue to flow in Vindonissa in the future, too.

Visitors to the *Vindonissa Legionary Trail at Museum Aargau* walk in the footsteps of Neptune. This journey into the past allows them to experience the Roman aqueduct with all their senses. An impressive experience, it allows them to encounter the water and its importance for the legionaries at Vindonissa at first hand at the original site.

Armand Baeriswyl: Water supply and disposal in medieval and early modern towns: The example of Berne.

Without drinking water, there is no life, and without industrial water supply, there is no commerce – medieval towns needed large amounts of water for all kinds of purposes. Moreover, excess water had to be drained off. The example of Berne illustrates the manifold uses of water and the related infrastructure.

The medieval town already had a water infrastructure with separate supply and drainage pipes at the time of its founding around the year 1200. Some of its notable elements are the *Stadtbach* stream, the water-carrying “*Ehgraben*” (sewage ditch) and the *Gewerbekanal*, a watercourse for industrial use diverted by means of a massive weir.

The development and expansion of this infrastructure was characteristic of developments in the late Middle and Early Modern Ages: The original shaft wells were successively replaced by large numbers of flowing wells. Since the 16th century, these were redesigned as lavishly decorated sculptured fountains that were no longer mere technical mechanisms, but also embodiments of municipal power and wealth.

Sonja Hablützel: Saving valuable cultural property on Lake Lucerne.

The five paddle steamers of Lake Lucerne are not only cherished as cultural heritage assets, but are also popular attractions for tourists from around the world as well for the local population.

The fact that these historic treasures still exist is only thanks to the *Dampferfreunde Vierwaldstättersee* (Lake Lucerne Steamship Appreciation Society), which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. In the early 1970^s, a group of farsighted individuals prevented one of the world's biggest inland steamship fleets from being sent to the scrapyard. Five steamships were saved, and these still remain in service thanks to significant financial support and idealistic engagement, with four of them now already operational for over 100 years (*Uri*, 1901 / *Unterwalden*, 1902 / *Schiller*, 1906 / *Gallia*, 1913).

The youngest member of the Lake Lucerne shipping line, and also its flagship, is the *Stadt Luzern* (“City of Lucerne”). Following a complete two-and-a-half year overhaul, it is now resplendent in new glory and will celebrate its 100th birthday in 2028.

The Lake Lucerne fleet, like the other steamships navigating Switzerland’s lakes, is a cultural heritage asset of national importance (Class A objects) in the PCP Inventory.

Isabelle Burkhalter: Maritime creatures at the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva.

With its opulent collection, the *Musée d'Art et d'Histoire* in Geneva is a place of engagement with extremely diverse worlds and epochs. It invites visitors to dive into the waters of Greek mythology – some deeper, some shallower – where they can encounter maritime creatures.

In ancient Greek civilization as reflected in its myths, the ocean and its unfathomable depths were admired, but also a source of fear. Those myths depict a maritime world populated by fabulous creatures, some of which are beautiful deities while others are veritable monsters. The Sirens, the Hydra, Scylla and Charybdis... these are the dreadful sea creatures over which the Greek heroes, above all the cunning Odysseus, must triumph to prove their renown.

The sea-nymphs, on the other hand, whether they live at the surface like the Nereids or in the depths of the abyss like the Oceanids, are depicted with a quite different image where beauty triumphs.

Gaëtan Morard, Mathieu Paul Aymon: The irrigation channels of Valais.

The irrigation channels of Valais (German: *Suonen*, French: *bisses*), much esteemed by hikers due to their only slightly inclined paths, are just as much part of the canton's cultural heritage as the mountains, raclette, and mills. Nevertheless, their original function – to convey water from the glaciers to the arable land along the mountain slopes – remains essential for agriculture in Valais.

The centuries-old *Suonen* experienced two major growth periods, during the 15th century and then again in the second half of the 19th century. The collective management and administration of these canals is an example of communal resource stewardship and use.

Today, the *Suonen* of Valais are facing new challenges related to climate change. The melting of the glaciers, the declining share of the population engaged in agriculture, and increasingly intense water use could spell the end of the *Suonen*. However, solutions are available to preserve them, today and for decades to come.