

“Nero, arxi ton panton”

Thales of Miletus, c.600BC

Water, the beginning of all things

Since the time of its birth, the city of Athens has lived with the notion that the perennial shortage of water faced by its inhabitants is rooted in a mythical contest between Olympian gods Poseidon and Athena. Consequently, from that time onwards, the city’s water systems have always been closely linked to the lives of the citizens of this historic center of knowledge and democratic principles.

Today, EYDAP sustains and upholds the duty first embodied in the ancient constitutional ‘water law’—the earliest recorded regulation referring to water usage—of Athenian statesman Solon, which ensured that any citizen who had no groundwater source of his own, was afforded the right to take water from the well of a neighbor. As the water history of the Attica area has always been associated to the quality of life, to the progress, and to the expansion of this city, it can be said that her citizens, and the people who until this day pass through Athens, have truly always been connected—physically, socially, culturally—by this one commons.

This digital presentation was designed to present an overview of the water sites of Athens and its periphery, as a visual water chronology which transitions between eras and locations. Through a framework map of historical water sources and today’s hydrological distribution systems, this interactive experience conveys images and connections across people of different communities, neighborhoods and ancestries. The connective possibilities generated by this network grid make possible new symbolic narratives between all the people—from ancient Athenians to the today’s transient Syrian refugee population—who have at one time in history accessed the waters of Attica.

The water of Athens, today within the custody of EYDAP, is a legacy and common heritage that has been protected and equitably distributed since the first ‘waterkeepers’ of Greece in the 6th century BC.



Δίκτυο Πολιτισμού ΕΥΔΑΠ