

XVII International Congress on Dry Stone

“Dry stone perspectives: challenges after the UNESCO inscription”

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Hommage à Jean Nicod (1923 – 2021) et aux jardins du karst.

The geographer and geomorphologist Jean Nicod, a man of science, a fertile multidisciplinary practitioner, curious about everything and a teacher at heart, left us at the end of this summer in his ninety-eighth year. Beforehand, he had the time to read and comment the latest publication of the ASER association (Ass. Sauvegarde, Étude, Recherche pour le patrimoine naturel et culturel du Var) where we have had the pleasure and honour of counting him among our members since 1990. Recently, given his advanced age, he no longer participated in seminars and public meetings. In other circumstances, he would surely have moved today to Konavle, to his beloved Croatian, Dalmatian, Montenegrin, Bosnian and Slovenian lands, where he knew in detail the coasts with their islands and the interior country dominated by the Dinaric Alps.

From the 1960s onwards, these places were the setting for pioneering and fundamental studies on limestone areas and landscapes and on karst formations. These studies amplified the work of the same kind carried out in Provence and on the Causses of the French Midi and of which Jean Nicod was the tireless actor. Indeed, in matter of karst, he is a leading researcher, teacher, convener of national (in France) and international (in Europe but also in the south-eastern Mediterranean) teams, founder and director of scientific journals. From Nice and Aix-en-Provence to Tübingen and Ljubljana, via Silesia, Turkey and Morocco, he has multiplied and maintained study areas and networks of professional and friendly relations.



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As a university professor from 1959 to 1993, he founded the ERA 282 of the CNRS ("Karstic evolution in Mediterranean and Alpine environments"), which he directed from 1971 to 1983. He also founded the Association Française de Karstologie, which he chaired from 1977 to 1986 and for which he founded the international journal of the same name (Karstologia). The impressive list of his publications (books and articles) goes far beyond the Provence country that he loved so much and is spread throughout his life. His last writings - and not the least - date from the years 2010-2015. Right up to the end, his sensitivities led him to regularly synthesise physical, naturalist and human data by placing man and his activities at the heart of the natural environment.

Indeed, his geomorphological, hydrological and vegetal approaches to the physical environment are complemented by historical and anthropological aspects concerning communication structures, water distribution, agrarian structures, and the profane and symbolic uses of the various elements and forms of nature. The "Karst Gardens", these micro plots of land that have been powerfully planned and arranged, in particular with the dry stone technique, and variably cultivated, often in complantation or *coltura promiscua*, constitute one of his privileged subjects of study. The term itself is more or less his invention. It is not surprising that, from the beginning of the formalisation of the International Society for the Multidisciplinary Study of Dry Stone, Jean Nicod was present and committed to its creation.

Thus, we had the chance - as was the case for ASER - to benefit from his experience for many years. He has always accompanied us with talks, outings, reviews and advice for most of our work. The moment he is leaving the stage, we would like to accompany and applaud him together with all his students, colleagues and friends by telling him THANK YOU.

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Short biographies of authors:

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