

Verleihung der Frontinus-Medaille an Dr. Hubertus Manderscheid

Eine der vornehmsten Aufgaben ist die Ehrung von Persönlichkeiten, die sich in besonderem Maße um die Erforschung der Geschichte der Wasserversorgungs-, Energieversorgungs- und Rohrleitungstechnik verdient gemacht haben, durch die Verleihung der Frontinus-Medaille.

So konnte anlässlich des Internationalen Kongresses der Frontinus-Gesellschaft in Rom (s. Bericht auf Seite 22) am 11. November 2018 die Frontinus-Medaille an Dr. Hubert Manderscheid verliehen werden.

Die Laudatio hielt Frau Dr. Gemma Jansen:

Laudatio for the Awarding of the Frontinus-Medal to Hubertus Manderscheid

Gemma Jansen

Dear colleagues, dear water friends,
Dear Dr. Hubertus Manderscheid,

Benvenute care Donatina e Irene - siamo molto felici che voi siate qui stasera.

This evening we celebrate the fact that Hubertus Manderscheid receives the Frontinus medal. He will receive it for his lifelong devotion to the study of Roman water systems and of Roman baths. The medal is given to him for his precise and painstaking studies and for the discoveries he made on the way. He fully deserves it and I will explain that to you now.

Everyone in this room, whether a scholar working on Roman water systems or whether an enthusiast of Roman aqueducts, knows the name Hubertus Manderscheid. Many of you called upon him for help while studying a Roman bath, while others wrote to him to mediate for a research project in Rome. Many will have his books in their study or have read his articles while working on their own research. I myself have some of his books on my shelves.

I shall not discuss everything Hubertus Manderscheid wrote, nor everything he investigated, I shall focus on his most important works and achievements. Let us start from the very beginning.

START

It all started with his work on sculptures in Roman baths *Skulpturenausstattung der kaiserzeitlichen Thermenanlagen* (1981). From there he made a bibliography on baths in the Roman world (1988): *Bibliographie zum römischen Badewesen (unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der öffentlichen Thermen)*. 13 years later Manderscheid provided an update. It was quite an achievement at that time, – a time when there was no internet and no Wikipedia. When we look back on it now, I am inclined to think that these books were the firm base of later Roman baths investigations in general.

The next logical – though unconventional step – was to study the water systems of the baths. Without water there were of course no baths. Up till then Hubertus Manderscheid studied very normal subjects: statues and buildings. It was a courageous step – in the German scholarly world of those days – to study something so technical as water supply. It was a subject that was out of the ordinary and that was rarely done at the time. On top of that he started to work with a water construction engineer, a fact even more unusual then. This engineer was Professor Günther Garbrecht of the Technical University of Braunschweig.

MORE WATER AND BATHS

Their cooperation was very fruitful: together they studied how water was brought into bath buildings and how it was used there, for example the water systems of the baths of Caracalla here in Rome. Manderscheid spoke on this subject on October 11 1988 at a Frontinus conference in Rome. *Aspekte der Wasserbewirtschaftung römischer Thermen unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Caracallathermen* (published in 1989).

Later on, as a duo they published a manual in 3 volumes on this very subject: *Die Wasserbewirtschaftung römischer Thermen, Archäologische und hydrotechnische Untersuchungen* (1994). This is still a groundbreaking book, a handbook that I myself take from the shelves many times. In a very logical way it covers all water features in a bath building. It has for example an illustration, showing the many water elements needed to warm the water in the baths (fig. 1). An illustration copied later on in many other books.

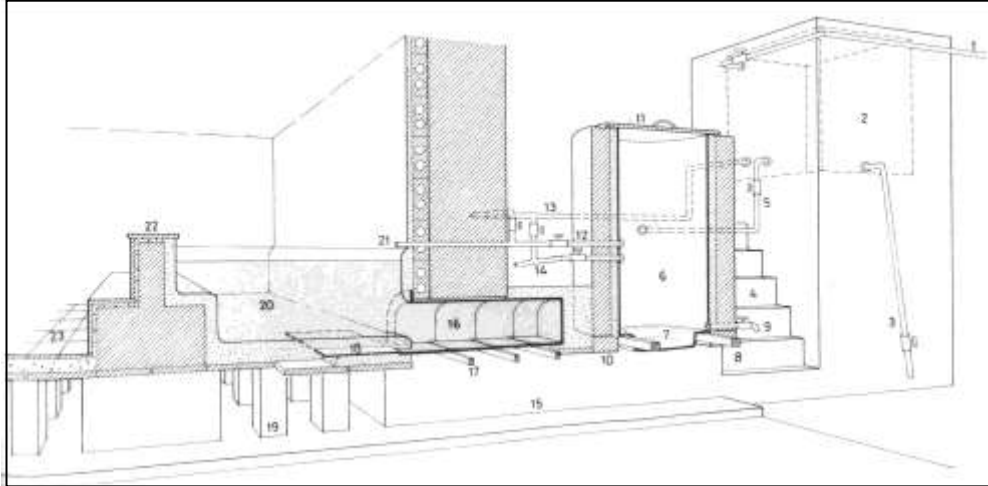


Fig. 1: Schematic presentation of the system to heat water in baths (from Garbrecht/Manderscheid 1994, A, Abb. 3)

Working and living in Rome Hubertus Manderscheid studied many Roman baths and their water systems, just to name a few:

1. He worked on the baths of Diocletian. I do not have to emphasize the large task – as everyone knows these baths are one of the largest in the Roman world. However, it is one of the baths that still have their original roofs.
2. He also worked on the water supply of the Palatine hill and published on that – especially on the baths of Maxentius.
3. However, he also worked outside of Rome. One of his books is on the Suburban baths of Pompeii (fig. 2). Though some know these baths from the erotic paintings, Manderscheid devoted several years to unravel the system of water supply, storage, use and drainage.

In the Vesuvius area he made one of his major discoveries, on which he wrote several articles. This discovery is related to the hot water swimming pools: the so-called *piscinae calidae*. In some baths a high tech system, a *samowar*, is used to heat the water in these large swimming pools (figs 3, 4). In Manderscheid's own words the 'non plus ultra' in Roman bath technology.



Fig. 2: Pompeii, Suburban Baths
(© DAI Zentrale Berlin,
D-DAI-Z-922608, P. Grunwald)



Fig. 3: Pompeii, Suburban Baths, room 2, *samowar*
(photo H. Manderscheid)

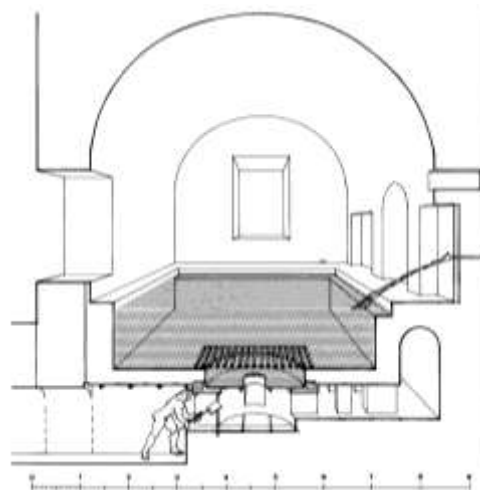


Fig. 4: Pompeii, Suburban Baths, room 2, reconstruction of the *samowar*
(drawing J. Weber)

It was expensive to install and a lot of work to keep it going. For those who do not know what the device is – said in a very simple way – a furnace to warm the water placed underneath the pool itself. It can be reached by a tunnel.

WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

However, Hubertus Manderscheid did not stay with baths – over the years he expanded his research field beyond water related to baths. At the Palatine hill he had also investigated other water features, such as reservoirs, toilets and nymphaea, like the so-called Bagni di Livia. And that was what he was going to do at Hadrian's villa near Tivoli. He started to work here on the overall water systems. A team of speleologists of *Sotterranei di Roma* under supervision of Marco Placidi worked together with him to document the sewer system. Later the Technische Hochschule of Lübeck joined the team. All elements of water supply were documented and its use was recorded. Though Manderscheid investigated all three baths of this site in detail, his most fascinating discovery was – in my opinion – how water was used in the famous dining area of the so-called Canopus complex. The emperor Hadrian was able to impress his guests with water surprises.

He also worked at Minturno, a Roman city 160 km south of Rome, where he studied the complete water system, now as part of a project of the German Archaeological Institute here in Rome. The project was devoted to the complete city and the buildings within. Hubertus Manderscheid studied how the water was brought into the city, the inner urban water system and of course the baths. Together with the group of speleologists of *Sotterranei di Roma* he studied the sewer system. The book is ready and will be printed any day now as number 33 of the Palilia series.

PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS

And I must tell – he did all these investigations without having tenure, but as an independent archaeologist. He kept on the track of research which he thought was important to contribute. I say this as I often notice that scholars working at universities or institutes have no idea how hard this is.

Over the years I started to know Hubertus Manderscheid more personally. He turns out to be a solid colleague and companion for his fellow archaeologists in Rome. He is also a family man – his wife Donatina is also an archaeologist – and a dear father for his daughter Irene. He likes food and likes preparing it, for example his famous spaghetti alla carbonara (*fig. 5*).



Fig. 5: Hubertus Manderscheid prepares spaghetti alla carbonara



Fig. 6: Hadrian's villa, coffee break (photo R. Kragting)

From this personal acquaintance of Hubertus Manderscheid I was also able to witness his way of working (*fig. 6*). Before I finish this laudatio, I have two personal observations that I want to share with you. The first is that I have seldom come across someone who is such a good observer. In the beginning he says nothing but you see him thinking, then after a while many - mostly difficult - questions pop up. In this way he is like the Greek philosopher Socrates who tries to understand something through asking questions and through looking at things from all possible angles. He does that with his own research – and naturally with his colleague's research. Maybe you can see that process at work (*fig. 7*) during our investigations of the toilets of Hadrian's villa. Of course, you end up with more questions than answers, but that is good. I guess better a lot of good questions than easy and maybe wrong answers.

The other thing I highly appreciate about Hubertus Manderscheid is his feeling for what is just and unjust. Let us call it his strong inner compass. From this he cares about archaeology and he tries to protect the archaeological remains, especially those of baths. For example after the discovery of a *samowar* at the Suburban baths at Pompeii, he was able to seduce the famous international firm Reinold Würth to finance a protecting roof (*fig. 8*).



Fig. 7: Hadrian's villa, discussing water system at one of the toilets (photo R. Kragting)



Fig. 8: Pompeii, Suburban Baths, protective roof over *samowar* (photo H. Manderscheid)

The other example is the discovery of a sanctuary of the nymphs in a church near the lake of Braciano. Here he discovered a water sanctuary in the woods. It was much overgrown and neglected. By writing an article about it he wanted to bring it to the attention of the local authorities and of course to his archaeologist colleagues. These are only two examples, he also made efforts to save endangered Roman baths at Aachen and Köln (Germany).

We have come to the end of a laudatio for someone who does not want to be praised. Yet he has done some incredible studies on water supply and drainage systems in Roman cities and baths. The books with bibliography, form a firm base for all later Roman bath research and his works on water supply systems to and in baths did set the bar high and others scholars still follow his classification.

Now we wait for Hubertus Manderscheid's most recent study to be published: Roman heating systems in houses and villas, so outside bath buildings. It will be thorough, it will be precise and it will give us new insights. Just what we are used from him.

Hubertus Manderscheid, Hubertus – congratulations with your medal, you deserve it deeply (*fig. 9*).



Fig. 9: Gilbert Wiplinger, head of the scientific board of the Frontinus-Society awarding the Frontinus medal to Hubertus Manderscheid, Nov. 11, 2018 at the International Conference, *De aquaeductu Urbis Romae - Sextus Iulius Frontinus and the Water of Rome* at Rome (photo H. Geiger).