

# Frontinus-Gesellschaft e.V.

Internationale Gesellschaft für die Geschichte  
der Wasser-, Energie- und Rohrleitungstechnik



**Cordial Invitation  
to the Online Lecture (ZOOM) on 12.03.2026, 6:00 pm (CET)**

**Prof. Rabun Taylor, PhD (USA)**  
**Frontinus, Nerva and the Politics of Water**  
(Lecture in English)

Rabun Taylor is Centennial Professor of Classical Archaeology at the University of Texas at Austin. His first book *“Public Needs and Private Pleasure: Water Distribution, the Tiber River, and the Urban Development of Ancient Rome”* (2000) dealt with the river crossings of the city’s ancient aqueducts and their implications for the city’s urban development and infrastructure. Another book *“Roman Builders: A Study in Architectural Process”* examined Roman monumental building from a logistical and cognitive perspective. Between 2009 and 2021 he directed the Aqua Traiana Project, which investigated the sources of Trajan’s aqueduct for Rome, introduced in 109 AD.

Rabun Taylor about his lecture:

*Frontinus’ „De aqueductu urbis Romae“ is a profoundly political document written in part to assist the emperor Nerva at a perilous moment of dynastic rupture and uncertainty in the imperial court. A highly respected senator, Frontinus was a key figure both in legitimizing Nerva’s reign and in engineering Trajan’s succession. His role as curator aquarum was also fitted to this role. After the Praetorian uprising in summer 97 CE, his reforms of the aqueduct system took on greater urgency as he found ways to use water as a tool to sway senatorial opinions toward Nerva and, by fall of that year, toward Trajan. Yet he was adopting reforms and expansions of the system that had begun under the last Flavian emperor, Domitian. The large aqueduct projects Domitian had begun - including, it is argued, the early phases of the Aqua Traiana - were occupying Frontinus’ watermen when he entered office. This led him to misrepresent their efforts on Domitian’s projects outside the city as petty thievery and corruption. He probably suspended early work on the Aqua Traiana but continued more advanced projects that promised a quicker political reward.*

The access data for the online meeting (ZOOM) are as follows:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87933930044?pwd=dIk4REZ4S0NnL3k2RGN2TVdtZTd3Zz09>

Meeting-ID: 879 3393 0044, Kenncode: 631844

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Hans Mehlhorn  
President of the Frontinus Society  
Society

Dipl.Ing. Gilbert Wiplinger  
Head of the Scientific Board of the Frontinus