

Margit Dahm-Kruse

9 Water and Urban Structures in the Narrative Worlds of Courtly Novels – Aesthetic and Symbolic Functions

Abstract: Medieval poets used water as a complex metaphor for a wide range of purposes. Through examples taken from the 13th-century novels ‘Herzog Ernst’ and Konrad Fleck’s ‘Flore und Blanscheflur’, the contribution will show that literary texts often refer to the broad symbolic and especially religious implications given to the element of water. Both epics contain elaborated descriptions of waterworks as central elements within different urban structures and architectures. These depictions of water refer to biblical images like the Garden of Eden or the Heavenly Jerusalem and therefore transport specific spiritual concepts of meaning. At the same time, a particular aesthetic and representative impact is given to them. The visualisation of artful controlled water turns out to be a highly suitable pattern to signify technological skills, power, and cultural refinement. The poetical significance of these waterworks lies in the creation of an intriguing interaction of this worldly claim of validity and the ‘proper’ Christian meaning of water.

Water with its potential to connect epistemic, symbolic, and metaphysical meaning is of high significance in medieval literary texts. By drawing on examples from courtly novels of the 13th century, this essay will show how descriptions of water and waterworks create poetical meaning on various levels. The fictional texts will not be read as an epistemological approach to the existential, geo-historical or economic significance of water which might be reflected in the literary medium, but rather as documents of the rich symbolic meaning and aesthetic functions given to descriptions and depictions of water.

Medieval culture in general displays a high affinity to symbolic and allegorical interpretations of the material world. Like all of the natural elements, water is not only regarded as a natural phenomenon, but also as a religious symbol. Even more than the other natural elements, water lends itself to symbolic usage. It is closely related to several spiritual concepts of meaning – first, and above all, it represents the transtemporal idea of spiritual purification which leads to the great significance of water in Christian liturgy in general and in baptism in particular,¹ but also numerous other religious concepts, such as the water of life. As James Smith outlines in his recent study, in religious writing water is often used as a metaphor to come to terms with elusive Christian concepts such as the purity of the soul or the divine grace and wisdom.² Water is also used to represent sophisticated fields of knowledge and theological concepts. Bernhard of Clairvaux, for example, used the imagery of water to describe the spread of spirituality in the human mind; furthermore, the Transubstantiation determines a close connection between water and the blood of Christ.³ At the same time, the functional significance of water in many different areas of human life builds up several correlations with its symbolic meaning. This simultaneity of metaphysical and epistemic meaning, or of abstractness and materiality, can particularly be seen within the realm of hygiene as a physical as well as spiritual matter.

1 Cf. Huber-Rebenich et al. 2017, 10.

2 Cf. Smith 2018; Smith 2017.

3 Cf. Miller 1986, 138–140. N. Miller presents in detail the complex imagery of water in several biblical passages, as well as in the theological discourse of the 13th century. A broad range of literary references to the symbolic meaning of water as water of life is collected by Classen 2011.

These symbolic or spiritual meanings, however, are not restricted to sacred contexts, but also play a significant role in secular writings.⁴ Even genuinely literary or fictional texts frequently made use of religious motifs and concepts of meanings.

According to the thematic frame of this volume, the main focus of this essay will be on the thematic connection of water and urban structures within medieval works of fiction. Therefore, I will analyse literary descriptions of waterworks and water supplies connected to urban landscapes and architectures. It can be shown that there is more to the extensive depictions of artful waterworks than just being a random element within the general descriptions of cityscapes or single buildings; they relate, rather, to particular Christian meanings. Water is part of the iconographic programmes of the Heavenly Jerusalem and the Earthly Paradise to which literary representations of cities, palaces, and palace gardens often refer. At the same time, the fictional texts mirror the representative impact of artfully designed waterworks.⁵ The artificially controlled element of water is a highly suitable motif for the symbolic representation of power, authority, and cultural refinement, as well as for the ambivalent configuration of the Orient.

Water in a perfect cityscape – the false Jerusalem in Herzog Ernst B

In the courtly literature of the 12th and 13th centuries, the main focus is on aristocratic protagonists and on the court as the main place of action. Due to this setting, extensive descriptions of cities are rare. If cities are mentioned in the narrative worlds of courtly novels, their presentations are mostly brief and focused on their material or architectural features, while the social structures or the economic, cultural, and political complexity of cities are seldom reflected. The descriptions are, in most cases, limited to certain topical elements, such as the fortification by walls, gates, towers and moats, as well as the sovereign's residence. Water is certainly a typical feature of these short depictions, since the cities are almost always surrounded by moats or natural waterways, but further elaborations on the importance of water in urban surroundings are rarely found.

Against this background, the significance of the first text example taken from the courtly novel 'Herzog Ernst' becomes apparent, as it goes far beyond these typical patterns. This novel contains not only one of the most elaborated representations of a city from the entire courtly literature, but also an extensive description of water within an urban landscape.

This anonymous narrative, dating back to the middle of the 12th century, was one of the most popular and widespread novels of the German Middle Ages. It is handed down in ten different versions dating from the 12th to the 16th century which testify to the enormous and long-lasting interest in this text. I will refer to version B as the oldest complete one.⁶

The novel is divided into two parts. The first part tells of the rise and fall of the Bavarian Duke Ernst, who in the first instance enjoys a high reputation with the German emperor Otto, but becomes disgraced through defamation. The emperor attacks Ernst's Bavarian homeland; neither the empress' nor the German lords' intervention can dissuade him from his unjust furor

⁴ Until well into the late Middle Ages, literacy and literary production were closely linked to ecclesiastical institutions and their personnel. Accordingly, sacred and secular writings were not dichotomously separated fields.

⁵ The particular potential of water-art to overtop the known and to create something unprecedented is mentioned in von Reden – Wieland 2015, 22.

⁶ The oldest version A from the 12th century has only survived in three fragments that altogether contain about 10 % of the entire text. B, commonly dated to the early 13th century, is considered to be very closely related to version A (cf. Bumke 2000, 413). An overview of the different versions is given by Behr 2011, 61–63 and Stock 2002, 152–158.

against Ernst.⁷ After a failed attempt to assassinate the Emperor and six years of war, Ernst flees with a small group of followers with the intention of travelling to Jerusalem. There he hopes to gain restitution and redemption by joining the crusades – due to the historical background, a not uncommon pattern in 13th century novels.

However, the journey does not lead Ernst and his men directly to their final destination Jerusalem. They get caught in a terrible sea storm and after an odyssey of several months they arrive at the coast of a foreign Eastern country named Grippia, where the second part of the novel takes place.⁸

At the beginning of this adventurous tale of the Orient, there is a long episode that takes place in a large and magnificent city.⁹ This episode constitutes the largest part of the novel and is clearly distinguished from the spatio-temporal structure of the rest of the text. In more than 600 verses the city is praised in superlative terms as a masterpiece of Oriental art of building. The approaching men first notice the strong external walls made of coloured marble, the golden battlements decorated with precious stones, and the particular glow of the city:

<p><i>do gesâhen si an den stunden ein hêrlîche burc stân,¹⁰ diu was al umbevân mit einer guoten miure. diu was harte tiure von edelem marmelsteine. [...] ouch wâren die zinnen beide ûzen und innen meisterlîch gezieret, mit golde wol gevieret und mit edelem gesteine, beide grôz und kleine, allez meisterlich geworht. [...] (corrupted) die veste, der schîn vil verre gleste.</i></p>	<p><i>Dort erblickten sie nun eine herrliche Stadt, die ganz und gar von einer großen und starken Mauer umgeben war die sehr kostbar und aus edlem Marmor war. auch waren die Zinnen sowohl außen wie innen kunstvoll verziert, mit Gold geschmückt und auch mit großen und kleinen Edelsteinen; es war alles kunstvoll gearbeitet. [...] die Stadt, deren Glanz weithin leuchtete.¹¹</i></p>
---	--

The colossal fortification, however, seems to be without function since the gates are open, and the men, to their astonishment, find the city completely empty:

⁷ The question of possible references to historical events is extensively discussed by Neudeck 2003.

⁸ In premodern literary texts, the symbolic potential of water is often used to mark moments of transgression. When protagonists of medieval novels cross rivers or seas, these waters are more than geographical markers for the spatial localization of the narrative. Water here functions primarily as a topical means of representing the transgression of spatial, as well as semantic boundaries. Voyaging across a body of water and entrusting oneself to the unpredictability of the sea is also a universal metaphor signifying contingency and human subjection to fate or to divine control. This explains why the protagonists of medieval epics so often experience storms at sea which keep them from their original destination and lead them to unknown places.

How the tradition of associating water with divine workings, unfolded in ancient myths, shapes the display of aquatic landscapes in the *Fora* of Rome can be seen in the contribution of Dylan Rogers in this volume.

⁹ It has to be mentioned that in ‘Herzog Ernst’ Grippia appears only as the name of the country, while the city itself is unnamed. Nevertheless, in research papers Grippia is generally used to term the city as well as the country.

¹⁰ The Middle High German term *burc* is used to signify a fortress as well as a city. The term *stat* is established only from the 12th century on and late into the 13th century *burc* is still used in many epics as a synonym for city. Cf. Ennen 1980, 13–19.

¹¹ The middle high German text is quoted from the following edition: Sowinski 1979, here V. 2212–2250 (Translations by M. D.-K.).

*Diu burctor wâren ûf getân.
dô sâhen die küenen man
nieman an den zinnen,
weder ûze noch innen.
[...]
dô sie in die burc drungen,
dô was dâ nieman innen.*

*Die Stadttore standen offen.
Da sahen die tapferen Männer
niemanden auf den Zinnen,
weder außen noch innen.¹²
[...]
Als sie in die Stadt drangen,
da war niemand dort drinnen.¹³*

This first description of the city clearly alludes to the biblical motif of the Heavenly Jerusalem.¹⁴ In the revelation of John, the Heavenly Jerusalem coming down to earth at the end of times is described as a glorious city whose square is limpid gold and that is surrounded by strong external walls decorated with precious stones of several colours.¹⁵ The Heavenly city is surrounded by great walls that do not serve the purpose of fortification, because the gates always stay open,¹⁶ therefore Grippia's open gates mark a very strong allusion to the biblical pattern. A very significant reference to the Heavenly Jerusalem is also given with Grippia's special shine that reminds one of the divine light in the likeness of crystal or precious stones which emanates from the Heavenly City.¹⁷

The Heavenly or New Jerusalem is an omnipresent paradigm with several overlying theological, allegoric-symbolical, and historical meanings. It is the central eschatological symbol in the Christian Middle Ages,¹⁸ at the same time representing the *ecclesia* and therefore the community of believers.¹⁹ It is the prototype of allegorical meaning and fourfold exegesis, and it is closely connected with medieval concepts of paradise represented not only by the Garden of Eden, but also by the Heavenly City.²⁰ In any case, the Heavenly Jerusalem is of great significance for the iconographic and also the literary tradition in the Middle Ages.²¹ The iconographic model of the Heavenly Jerusalem underlies the description of cities in many texts from religious as well as secular contexts. Thus, the 'Herzog Ernst' is not the only example that makes use of this religious pattern and its specific aesthetic impact.

In 'Herzog Ernst', the arrival at the heavenly-seeming city of Grippia appears in the first instance as a rescue, even as salvation after the terrible months at sea. The nearly starved men step into the beautiful city and after a while they find a splendid banqueting table within a courtyard.²² They help themselves to food and afterwards they return to their ships. But despite the Christian allusions and despite the beauty of the city and the lifesaving food it provides, it is obvious that Grippia is not an altogether graceful place: the emptiness of the city is suspicious from the beginning, and Ernst's men are constantly expecting to be attacked. However, it is precisely this danger which promotes the enormous seductive power of the city: even though the men, now provided with food, have returned safely back to their ships, the duke, fascinated

¹² 'Herzog Ernst', ed. Sowinski 1979, V. 2311–2314.

¹³ 'Herzog Ernst', ed. Sowinski 1979, V. 2362 f.

¹⁴ This reference is already highlighted by Bowden 2012, 23.

¹⁵ Apc 21, 10–21. All Bible verses relate to the following edition of the *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*: Weber – Gryson 2007.

¹⁶ Apc 21, 25.

¹⁷ Apc 21, 11; 21, 23–24.

¹⁸ See, for example, Stoltmann 2008, 375; Hengel 2000, 251.

¹⁹ 'Vornehmlich die Stadt, das himmlische Jerusalem, ist eine Metapher, die immer wieder in der Literatur den Gottesstaat und die Kirche vertritt. Kirche – Stadt – Gottesstaat erscheinen bis weit in das 13. Jahrhundert unter gemeinsamen Anschauungsformen' (Bandmann 1951, 85). See also Angenendt 2005, 311.

²⁰ Kugler 1986, 84–87. 110–112; Miller 1986, 148.

²¹ Lilley 2004, 300 f.

²² Ernst considers the dishes and drinks to be God-given, intended to save the men from death, but also to test their self-control. He allows his men to eat and drink, but not to take anything of the gold and the precious objects around them. When the story progresses, it becomes clear that the banquet was provided for the wedding of Grippia's king which was going to take place that day, so there was nothing divine about it at all.

by Grippia's overwhelming beauty, decides to go back and to take a closer look at the splendid cityscape:

<i>mich lustet vil sêre</i>	<i>Ich habe große Lust</i>
<i>daz ich hin wider kêre</i>	<i>noch einmal zurückzukehren</i>
<i>und die burc baz besehe,</i>	<i>und die Stadt genauer anzusehen;</i>
<i>swaz halt mir dar inne geschehe:</i>	<i>was mir auch dort geschehen möge:</i>
<i>sie ist sô rehte wol getân.</i>	<i>sie ist so schön gestaltet.²³</i>

So, the protagonist succumbs to the aesthetic temptation of the city, regardless of potential danger. Accompanied just by his closest follower Wetzell, Ernst starts a second, much more extended expedition through the city. Upon his return, Grippia's exorbitant splendour, artistry, and technical refinement is described in yet more detail. Ernst and his companion are advancing further and further into Grippia's centre. They see a number of palaces and step into pompously decorated halls; nearly everything is made from marble and gold and covered with jewels and an almost unreal glow is emanating from these objects. The whole description intends to convey overwhelming visual impressions: 'The description of the city [...] is a visual tour de force, and the reader or listener is encouraged to gaze with Ernst upon its wonders'.²⁴

On their tour, the men also enter the royal palace, which proves to be the highlight of Grippia's pomp and splendour and where they discover an artful water supply. In the royal courtyard, they discover two springs, one of them cold, the other warm:

<i>sie sâhen zwêne brunnen</i>	<i>Sie sahen zwei Quellen</i>
<i>die ûz dem hove runnen,</i>	<i>die aus dem Hof rannen,</i>
<i>der ein was warm, der ander kalt.</i>	<i>die eine warm, die andere kalt.</i>
<i>mit listen sô was daz gestalt</i>	<i>Kunstfertig war es so eingerichtet,</i>
<i>daz sie vil schône schuzzen</i>	<i>dass sie beide an der gleichen Stelle</i>
<i>und reinliche duzzen</i>	<i>sehr schön und klar</i>
<i>mit ein ander an ein stat.</i>	<i>nebeneinander dahinflossen.</i>
<i>dâ bî stuont ein schoene bat:</i>	<i>Daneben stand ein schönes Badehaus:</i>
<i>daz was algemeine</i>	<i>das war ganz</i>
<i>von grünem marmelsteine</i>	<i>mit grünen Marmorsteinen</i>
<i>wol gewelbet und überzogen,</i>	<i>überwölbt und verkleidet</i>
<i>gevest mit starken swibogen.</i>	<i>und mit starken Schwibbögen gestützt.</i>
<i>wie möhte daz zierlicher sîn?</i>	<i>Wie könnte es schöner sein?</i>
<i>zwô büttin rôd guldîn</i>	<i>Zwei rotgoldene Badewannen</i>
<i>die stuonden in liehtem schîne.</i>	<i>standen im Lichtglanz.</i>
<i>zwô rôre silberîne,</i>	<i>Zwei silberne Rohre,</i>
<i>geworht mit grôzen fuogen,</i>	<i>die sehr kunstvoll gefertigt waren,</i>
<i>die daz wazzer dar in truogen.</i>	<i>trugen das Wasser hinein.</i>
<i>mit listen sô was daz getân.</i>	<i>Dies war sehr kunstvoll ausgeführt.²⁵</i>

The two symmetrically flowing wells supply a beautiful bathhouse made of green marble where the water runs through pipes of pure silver. The bathhouse contains two golden bathtubs that can be filled just as desired with cold and warm water. The narrator emphasizes repeatedly the great artistry of this construction. But the wells not only supply water to the bathhouse, they also serve to keep the city clean. The water is channelled through the entire city and, when required, can be used to clean the marble streets. Dirt and filth have no chance in Grippia and the narrator states with amazement that the streets are glittering like snow and that there is probably no other city in the entire world of likewise beauty and splendour:

²³ 'Herzog Ernst', ed. Sowinski 1979, V. 2485–2489.

²⁴ Bowden 2012, 20.

²⁵ 'Herzog Ernst', ed. Sowinski 1979, V. 2655–2673.

ez was ouch geleitet,
 über al die burc gebreitet:
 daz geschach mit sinne.
 die strâzen dar inne
 beide grôz und kleine
 wâr von marmelsteine,
 sumlîche grüne als ein gras.
 so in der burc erhaben was
 und man dâ schône wolde hân,
 sô liez man daz wazzer sân
 über al die burc gên.
 sô mohte dâ niht bestên
 weder daz hor noch der mist.
 in einer vil kurzen frist
 sô wart die burc vil reine.
 ich waene burc deheine
 ûf erden ie sô rîch gestê:
 ir strâzen glizzen sô der snê.

Es wurde auch weitergeleitet
 und durch die ganze Stadt geführt.
 Das geschah mit gutem Bedacht:
 Die Straßen in der Stadt,
 die großen wie die kleinen,
 waren aus Marmorsteinen,
 manche so grün wie das Gras.
 Wenn man in der Stadt aufgestanden war
 und dort Sauberkeit wünschte,
 so ließ man sogleich das Wasser
 durch die ganze Stadt fließen.
 So konnte dort weder Staub
 noch Unrat bleiben.
 In kürzester Zeit
 wurde die ganze Stadt gereinigt.
 Ich glaube, daß es auf der ganzen Erde
 keine so prächtige Stadt gibt:
 Ihre Straßen glitzern wie der Schnee.²⁶

These springs rising symbolically from the royal courtyard and therefore from the heart of the city, form another analogy to the Heavenly Jerusalem. The picture inventory of John's revelation contains a river rising from the midst of the Heavenly city, carrying the water of life from the lamb's throne to the entire city.²⁷

Through the image of the Heavenly Jerusalem, the city of Grippia is equipped with religious meaning in the first instance, but the Christian pattern is undermined as the story progresses and Grippia's inhabitants return. The Grippians are hybrid beings with crane-heads atop their well-shaped and well-dressed human bodies.²⁸ They have abducted a Christian princess from India who, to her horror, shall be forced to marry Grippia's King. Of course the Duke decides to free the princess. A tremendous slaughter starts and many Grippians lose their lives, but unfortunately the Indian princess and most of Ernst's men, who had rushed back to the city to help the duke, die, too.

But the initially heavenly-seeming city is not only called into question by the appearance of its cruel and heathen inhabitants and the devastating battles. The perfect cityscape itself turns out to be a doubtful or ambivalent place through the strong seductive power it has on the succumbing protagonist. This becomes apparent in the scene where the Duke discovers the water supply and the bathhouse mentioned above. The protagonist's behaviour in this scene becomes slightly strange. Even though his companion urges him to hurry up, because he is afraid Grippia's inhabitants could return at any moment, Ernst insists on the two of them taking off their clothes and bathing extensively in the golden bathtubs. Afterwards, they walk to the royal bedchamber and lie down in a magnificent bed – which is prepared for the wedding night of Grippia's king – and there, they rest for a while.

²⁶ 'Herzog Ernst', ed. Sowinski 1979, V. 2681–2698.

²⁷ Apc 22, 1–2.

²⁸ The appearance of Cyclopes, Skiapodes, Antipodes or other kinds of so-called 'Wundervölker' or *monstra* is a quite common pattern, not only in several medieval novels, but also in medieval *mappae mundi*. For example, the Ebstorf Map (around 1300) or the Hereford Map (end of the 13th century) depict different kinds of monstrous races more or less everywhere outside Europe. Medieval 'knowledge' of *monstra* is based on an encyclopaedic tradition from Antiquity, especially on Plinius' *Naturalis historia* and the antique *Physiologus* (cf. Haupt 2006, 79 f.; Szklénar 1966, 182). While there is consensus about these origins in general, the source of the crane-men as a particular and also unique type of Eastern *monstrum* remains unclear. Lecouteux presented an old legend found in a letter of Petrus Damiani (1007–1072) as a possible source (cf. Lecouteux 1981, 100–102), while Haupt considered the crane-men to be a variety of the Cynocephali as a more frequently mentioned sort of *monstrum* (cf. Haupt 2008, 167 f.). For an overview of the research on the crane-men, see Bowden 2012, 24–26.

This bathing-scene is the climax of Ernst's succumbing to the temptation of the aesthetically perfect city. Besides the obvious homoerotic allusions, the pleasure in the luxurious bathhouse leads to his failure to flee the city in time before the Grippian's return. The entire second course through the city refers to the Augustinian discourse of *vana curiositas*,²⁹ the lust of the eyes that contradicts spiritual self-knowledge and the knowledge of God. The heavenly-seeming city turns out to be profoundly worldly, it is a masterwork of worldly technical skills designed for worldly pleasures, and there is nothing spiritual about it at all: 'It is a city designed, it seems, for physical pleasure, of which Ernst and Wetzel partake. The un-spiritual nature of the city is further stressed by the emphasis on the fact it is man-made and displays the utmost in what appears to be human mechanical skill'.³⁰ With the bathing-scene at the latest, Ernst is finally captivated by his worldly desires, evoked by the extraordinary attraction of the city. It is certainly not the water of life that springs from Grippia's center and the bath in no way refers to any kind of spiritual purification,³¹ Grippia's water only serves the purpose of physical enjoyment.

The city of Grippia, in contrast to the Christian allusion, turns out to be an epitome not of divine glory, but of profoundly earthly splendour misleading the protagonist and distracting him from his restitution. The artful water supply and the luxury bathhouse are central elements in the display of splendour at a heathen place that is diametrically opposed to the sacred Jerusalem as a place of salvation

This strong semantic and also aesthetic opposition becomes even more apparent when Ernst, as the story progresses, finally reaches Jerusalem as the original goal of his journey and the earthly symbol for the eternal divine grace to be fulfilled in the Heavenly City. The city of Jerusalem is described only in a few verses mentioning Ernst making sacrifices at the Christian sanctuaries. Compared to the overwhelming beauty and sensuous temptation in the city of Grippia, Jerusalem as a place of salvation is completely restricted to its spiritual significance, while its material, aesthetic, and spatial qualities are not mentioned at all.

But even though the visual and sensuous enjoyments of the beautiful city and its splendid waterworks are called into question, Grippia's attraction is intensely unfolded before it is negated. The presentation of the initially empty city with its impressive architecture, precious materials and its water supply creates an almost utopian aesthetic sphere. The urban site offers the protagonist an intense aesthetic perception for which there is neither time nor space in any other part of the entire novel.

Waterworks as a signum of sovereignty – the Babylonian tower in 'Flore und Blanscheflur'

Another extensive description of water technology in connection with urban architecture can be found in Konrad Fleck's courtly novel 'Flore und Blanscheflur', written around 1220. The story of 'Flore und Blanscheflur' was a popular narrative which was widespread in the European literature of the 12th and 13th centuries.³²

²⁹ This is, for example, pointed out by Baisch 2012, 77.

³⁰ Bowden 2012, 21.

³¹ On this point M. Stock differs, who considers the bath as a symbolical purification that prepares the protagonist's restitution and re-integration, which take place in a later episode (cf. Stock 2002, 203–205).

³² The Middle High German 'Flore und Blanscheflur' is based on a French novel, even though the concrete underlying version is unknown (cf. Putzo 2015, 2–11). Konrad Fleck expanded the French text substantially, from about 3,000 to more than 8,000 verses, whereby a large part of these extensions is attributable to extensive descriptions of several works of art and splendid buildings. These complex ekphrastic text passages have enjoyed increasing interest in recent research, because they play a significant role for the discussion of courtly love as unfolded in the novel; see, for example, Dahm-Kruse 2016; Egidi 2005; Waltenberger 2003; Wandhoff 2006.

The story is about the exceptional love between Flore, son of a Moorish king, and Blansche-flur, daughter of a Christian slave. Their love has to prevail against much resistance, until it is concluded with Flore's Christian conversion, their marriage, and the restitution of Christian rule in Spain. The protagonists' outstanding love is honoured with a particular significance in the history of salvation, since their daughter is destined to become – as is foretold in the prologue – the mother of Charlemagne. That way, Flore and Blansche-flur become the origin of the renewal of the Holy Roman Empire.

But before this outstandingly happy ending, Flore's mother, who does not approve of her son's love for a Christian slave, sells Blansche-flur to the court of the Babylonian Emperor, the Amiral, in order to separate the lovers. Flore therefore embarks on the exhausting journey to Babylon to free Blansche-flur. The episode which takes place in Babylon contains an extensive description of a monumental tower belonging to the Amiral's palace. This Babylonian monument is characterized by a maximum of artistry and technical skills. In its enormous dimensions, the indestructible tower mirrors the absolute power of the Emperor, to whom 70 kingdoms are subject. Inside, the tower is magnificently decorated in immeasurable splendour. Besides a highly impressive great hall, the tower contains 70 bowers, whose floor pavements, walls and ceilings are decorated over-abundantly with gold, precious stones, and paintings. The description of the tower represents the Amiral's hubris by drawing an analogy to the biblical Tower of Babel. Special attention within the description of the tower is paid to a highly artful water supply. At the base of the tower, a spring is located, from where water is conducted through silver-lined pillars which are as high as the tower itself, so that clear and cold water is always available:

*in dem turne unden,
dâ ist ein schoene brunne,
baz dan ich gesagen kunde,
mit listen geleitet wol
in einen philer, der ist hol,
dem turne ebenhóch.
ein schoener silberin nôch
ist vermüret dar inne,
daz der brunne rinne
durch daz silber alsô klâr
und kalt belibe über jâr.³³*

*Am Fuße des Turmes
ist eine schöne Quelle,
kunstvoller, als ich es ausdrücken kann,
wird sie durch einen Pfeiler geleitet,
der hohl ist und
so hoch wie der Turm.
Schönes Silberwerk ist
darinnen vermauert,
so dass die Quelle
klar durch das Silber fließt
und das ganze Jahr über kühl bleibt.*

Furthermore, it is explained in the elaborate description, that the water runs through an artful piping system made of marble which supplies all bowers with clear water. At the very top of the tower, a large fountain figure is installed. It represents a man from whose mouth the water runs before being carried to the piping system. Of course, the impressive hydraulic system behind this water supply is not explained in detail. In fact, the narrator repeatedly expresses his astonishment at this seemingly magical technical performance.³⁴

Water is also a crucial element of a daily ritual the Amiral has established: in each of his 70 bowers live three women who are there to please him with their beauty, and from whom he chooses a new wife each year. Two of these women – one of them is Blansche-flur – have to bring fresh water from the precious water supply to the Amiral's bed every morning and evening.

The artful water supply stands at the centre of the tower description. Its sophistication is a *pars pro toto* for the unlimited technical possibilities available to the Amiral because of his enormous power and economic opportunities. The artful and also artificial water supply which

³³ The text is quoted from 'Flore und Blansche-flur', ed. Putzo 2015, here verses 4224–4234 (translation M. D.-K.).

³⁴ When A. Classen reads the water supply in the Babylonian tower as a document of standard 'bathroom technology [...] amongst the highest social classes' (Classen 2017, 473), he downplays the obvious remarks characterizing the water supply as absolutely outstanding and extraordinary.

is there to please the Amiral's aesthetic demands symbolizes the sovereign's omnipotence, which extends even to the natural element of water. Thus, the literary description mirrors the prestigious potential of water constructions and waterworks. In their simultaneity of luxury, technical skills, and aesthetic impact, they are an effective means for self-ennoblement and the exhibition of power.³⁵ The fountain figure sitting on top of the tower clearly embodies the absolute power of the Amiral, who reigns over 70 kingdoms, the city of Babylon, the tower, and also over the natural element of water.

Water in the Garden of Eden – the false Paradise in 'Flore und Blanscheflur'

Besides descriptions of waterworks and water supplies in the context of city and palace architectures, water is a substantial part of descriptions of gardens, which frequently feature in the narrative worlds of courtly novels. These gardens are commonly located close to cities or palaces, but they are also clearly separated from their surroundings. As culturally shaped natural spaces, they embody a tension between the natural and the cultural sphere.³⁶ Just like the description of cities with their allusions to the Heavenly Jerusalem, these garden-descriptions often make references to Christian symbolism. The presentations of gardens in medieval novels make use of the ancient concept of the *locus amoenus* and its typical elements. Its basic features are a green meadow, trees, and a spring or a creek; furthermore elements like lovely birdsong or a delightful smell often appear.³⁷ In medieval narrative contexts, the pattern of the *locus amoenus* refers to the biblical Garden of Eden and thus also to the specific symbolic meaning of water in the garden of Paradise.³⁸ According to the first book of Moses, there is a spring in the middle of the Garden of Eden that provides water for the garden and which divides into four streams that constitute the rivers of Paradise.³⁹ A broad spectrum of symbolic meaning has been given to Eden's waters in the Christian tradition. It can be read as an allegory for the water of life, for God's grace and wisdom, and for the purity of the soul.

At the same time, the imagery around the *locus amoenus* alludes to the *hortus conclusus* as a symbol for St Mary's virginity, a common motif in the medieval iconographic tradition.⁴⁰ This concept originates from the allegorical interpretation of a passage from the Song of Songs, where the bride is called a closed garden, and a sealed spring which relates to St Mary in medieval Bible exegesis.⁴¹

In courtly novels, the *amoenus* gardens are a favourite setting for love encounters and love affairs. The imagery of the closed garden with its allusions to Paradise is commonly used by medieval authors to elevate courtly or worldly love to a higher spiritual meaning.⁴² But the

³⁵ Cf. von Reden – Wieland 2015, 16f. Similarly H.-R. Meier, who describes the substantial representative effect of waterworks in connection with palace architecture through the example of the palaces of the Hauteville dynasty in Palermo (cf. Meier 2017, esp. 605).

³⁶ The connection of natural and artificial components, especially in urban aquatic landscapes, is reflected in the contribution of Adam Rogers in this volume.

³⁷ The ancient spatial topos of the *locus amoenus*, even if transformed in some ways, remained the main pattern in medieval descriptions of nature. The use of fixed attributes evokes a set of established implications, but that does not lead to homogenous readings; the concrete concepts of meaning depend on the specific context (cf. Thoss 1972, 17–20. 153–155).

³⁸ Miller refers to the close connection between the Garden of Eden and the *locus amoenus* within medieval literary and pictorial presentations of gardens (cf. Miller 1986, 137f.).

³⁹ Gn 2, 8–14.

⁴⁰ Cf. Miller 1986, 151.

⁴¹ Sg 4, 12.

⁴² U. Ernst highlights the strong correlation between gardens and conceptions of paradise in medieval novels (cf. Ernst 2007, 167f.).

Christian allusions can also function to emphasize problematic aspects of worldly love, as they point to the insoluble opposition of divine and carnal love as a fundamental conflict in courtly literature.

In this way, the gardens in courtly literature often prove to be ambivalent spaces, as the actions taking place there can contradict religious and social norms. A popular example is Gottfried's von Straßburg well known courtly novel 'Tristan', in which the protagonists' exceptional, but also adulterous and sinful love is exhibited in such an *amoenus* garden.⁴³

An especially spectacular description of a garden can also be found in Konrad Fleck's 'Flore und Blanscheflur', which features a beautiful garden as part of the Amiral's residence. This garden is equipped with the typical attributes of the *locus amoenus* and the narrator makes an explicit reference to the Garden of Eden when he describes the Amiral's garden as being like Paradise. At the same time, it is clearly highlighted that this garden is neither a real natural, nor a paradisiacal space, but a splendid construction brought into being through the Amiral's power.⁴⁴ He commanded the buying and planting of the valuable trees and he ordered an enormous wall to be built around the garden so that nobody could get inside without his permission.⁴⁵

The analogy to Paradise is countered even more by the actions taking place in the garden.⁴⁶ The garden provides the setting for the annual election of the Amiral's new bride – as mentioned above, he chooses a new bride each year. All women living in the Amiral's tower have to take part in the election, even though none of them is particularly keen to become the wife of the powerful ruler, because this election means their certain death. In his exaggerated possessive thinking, the Amiral does not tolerate the possibility of another man having one of his ex-wives, so they are killed once the one-year period of their marriage is over. The election itself follows an artfully staged rite in which water once again plays an important role. Under a tree with blood-red blossoms, all the women have to step across a spring with crystal-clear water. This water possesses a remarkable ability. If one of the candidates is not a virgin, the water turns red – which results in her being immediately put to death. If her virginity is intact, the water stays pure and clear as before:

*ein brunne springet dar under,
der ist sô wunderlicher tugent
daz irz kûme gelouben mugent,
wan ez wundert ouch uns.
ze allen zîten ist sîn runs
lûter als ein kristalle.
dar über müezent sie alle,
sô man sie versuochen wil,
ir sî lützel oder vil,
schrîten her und aber hin.
ist einiu danne under in,
diu man hât gewonnen,
sô wirt der runs von dem brunnen*

*Eine Quelle entspringt darunter,
die ist von so wundersamer Art,
dass ihr es kaum glauben werdet,
denn es wundert auch mich.
Zu allen Zeiten ist ihr Wasser
klarer als ein Kristall.
Darüber müssen sie alle,
wenn man sie prüfen will,
es seien wenige oder viele,
hin und her schreiten.
Ist eine unter ihnen,
die bereits gewonnen wurde,
so wird das Wasser der Quelle*

⁴³ See, for example, Ernst about 'Tristan' and other courtly novels that stage a garden as place of love-fulfillment: 'Insofern die Liebesbeziehung vorehelicher oder ehebrecherischer Art ist, stellt sie eine sexuelle Transgression dar, die in die Idylle und Utopie des Gartens einen Normenkonflikt trägt' (Ernst 2007, 178).

⁴⁴ M. Waltenberger points to the 'artifizuell konzentrierte[n] Veredelung von Natur' as part of the problematic setting (Waltenberger 2003, 31).

⁴⁵ H. Wandhoff explains through another example that the works of art in 'Flore und Blanscheflur' figure wrong conceptions of love and eternity. The heathen figures take the man-made image for the real, they take the 'Abbild für das Urbild' (Wandhoff 2006, 75). This applies especially to the Amiral, who believes his artificial Garden Eden to be a real paradise.

⁴⁶ Of course, the Paradise pattern has already been undermined by the localization in Babylon as a counter-model to Christian Paradise and to the Heavenly Jerusalem.

<p>zestunt rehte rôt. swer diu ist, diu muoz den tôt kiesen in kurzer vrist. sweliu aber maget ist, von der wirt nieman gewar daz er werde missevar niuwan lüter als ein glas, der selben varwe als er was.⁴⁷</p>	<p>sofort ganz rot. Wer diese auch ist, sie muss sofort den Tod erleiden. Welche aber Jungfrau ist, bei der wird man es nicht erleben, dass es eine andere Färbung annimmt als die klaren Glases, die gleiche Farbe, die es zuvor hatte.</p>
---	---

The symbolic potential of water as a signifier for purity, i. e. virginity, which derives from the Christian iconographic tradition, is here perverted by using water as a medium to test the contestant's virginity. At the same time this water test resembles medieval ordeals which made use of a special metaphysical evidence assigned to the natural elements.⁴⁸ The pure water that unmasks the culprit in the ordeal here reliably brands the fallen women unworthy of marriage and thus becomes part of the Amiral's ways of exerting his power and control.

In this novel, the imagery of the *locus amoenus* as a common place for the fulfilment of love in courtly literature is used to create a stark contrast to the cruel ritual established by the Oriental despot, whose garden is anything but a paradisiacal place. The element of water with its aesthetical impact and vast symbolic implications of purity is at the centre of this discourse. At the same time, the element of water, which is forced to serve the ritual of the Emperor, becomes once again a symbol of absolute power.

The elaborate descriptions of waterworks in the Babylonian palace and garden and in the city of Grippia are part of ekphrastic text passages, thus extensive descriptions of artworks or architectures that evoke an intense visualization of these artful objects or places.⁴⁹ Such rhetorical representations of cultural artefacts are not only a common element in medieval novels because they exhibit artistic mastery, they also invite reflections on particular concepts of meaning.⁵⁰ The intense visualization of artful waterworks is, apart from its strong aesthetic appeal, an effective motif to signify outstanding technological and cultural competence. At the same time, these descriptions refer to Biblical images and evoke a reflection on the underlying religious meanings.

It is furthermore no coincidence that these extensive descriptions of artfully controlled water are located in the Oriental sphere. Such representations of exceptional artistry are symbols for the dialectic of medieval images of the East, and portray a form of 'pre-modern Orientalism'.⁵¹ In medieval literary contexts, the East often figures as an epitome of the foreign space

⁴⁷ 'Flore und Blanscheflur', ed. Putzo 2015, verses 4462–4482 (translation by M. D.-K.).

⁴⁸ In the medieval theological discourse, ordeals were disputed, and from the fourth Lateran Council (1215) onwards, it was even forbidden for clerics to take part in them. Nevertheless, the practice of ordeals is still mentioned in legal texts like the 'Sachsenspiegel' or the 'Schwabenspiegel' (both 13th century) (cf. Becker 2003, 1594 f.). Regardless of their concrete significance in legal practice, in literary texts ordeals were a very popular motif; several novels, short stories, and plays testify to their potential for a broad range of poetical usages.

⁴⁹ Wandhoff does not consider the city of Grippia to be an ekphrasis in the strict sense (cf. Wandhoff 2003, 223). Wandhoff refers to a modern understanding of ekphrasis that distinguishes between the ekphrasis in the proper sense, as a description of a piece of visual art, from the ekphrasis in the broader sense as a rhetorical strategy to evoke an intense visualization of any kind of object (cf. Wandhoff 2003, 21–23). But this division is not really suitable for the description of Grippia. First, architecture in this idealized form is part of visual arts, and, more importantly, the description of the empty city in its sheer materiality leads to a perception that takes the city as a whole to be a work of art.

⁵⁰ Cf. Wandhoff 2003, 5–7.

⁵¹ Edward Said's extensive study 'Orientalism' (Said 1978) is commonly seen as the founding text of the academic field of post-colonial studies. The main hypothesis is the assumption that Western images of the Orient are based much more on cultural, especially literary, conceptions than on factual experiences. This mental construction is often influenced by fantastic or romantic imaginings of the East which mirror much more the cultural longings of the West than the reality of Eastern cultures. Furthermore, the Western conception of the Orient is predominantly based on a negative discourse that connects the East with marks like violence, injustice, and decadence. Therefore, the East is

and the ‘other’. Its depictions commonly display a dialectical tension of extremely positive, as well as extremely negative attributes. On the one hand, the Eastern space is often associated with cultural, technological, and economic superiority. In medieval novels, the Orient often functions as a kind of projection screen for the own longing for technical and cultural refinement, and as a draft of the marvellous. On the other hand, these texts also depict negative stereotypes by characterizing the non-Christian Oriental peoples and rulers as extraordinarily violent and cruel. This can be seen in the example of the Grippians with their merger of human parts with monstrous attributes. They figure a strong opposition of outstanding cultural refinement of the one part and absolute strangeness of the other. Similarly, the Amiral, who is incredible rich and powerful and embodies a perfect courtly lifestyle, is, at the same time, a remarkably misogynous despot.⁵²

The specific narrative presentation of urban structures and their waterworks contributes to this ambiguous conception of the East: a well-known Christian picture inventory is used that evokes specific allusions. But these pictures are transferred into a negative context that contradicts their proper Christian semantic content. The notions of the Heavenly Jerusalem or the Garden of Eden are linked to heathen spheres and therefore they are somehow doubtful what becomes apparent at the latest when the stories progress: Neither Grippia nor Babylon, despite their seemingly paradisiacal beauty, become places of fulfilment, but turn out to be diametrically opposed to the connected Christian conceptions.

The presentation of water is a crucial feature within this poetical strategy. The waterworks with their appearance of the magical and the remarkably functionalized spring are essential parts of the ekphrastic descriptions of the cityscape, the palace, and the palace garden. In first instance, the artfully controlled water is an epitome of cultural competence and refinement, and its highly aesthetic appeal is extensively presented in all of the given examples. But this aesthetic claim of validity is contradictory when combined with genuine Christian implications.⁵³ The artful, but therefore also artificial mastery over the element of water conflicts with its divine nature and spiritual meaning.

used to oppose the cultural self-image of the West as a civilized, liberal, and enlightened sphere. Said’s assumptions were strongly influenced by Michel Foucault’s discourse theory and by Foucault’s thesis that every nation and every culture needs the distinction from some (however defined) ‘other’ to define itself. In other words, the Orient is created as a sort of cultural counter-model to sharpen the Western self-definition. Said’s study is based on the analysis of a broad and heterogeneous text corpus containing literary texts, scientific, theological and philosophical studies, and newspaper articles dating from the 18th to the 20th centuries, while medieval texts were – according to the focus on colonialism – of small importance. But in medieval literature, the question of cultural self-construction by defining a mostly inferior ‘other’ is of great significance, too. In the Middle Ages, images of the foreign Orient are even more based on literary constructions than in modern times. Besides famous travel narratives like that of Jean de Mandeville, the ‘Herzog Ernst’ with its large Orient tale is one of the most discussed examples for a pre-modern debate on Orientalism. See, for example, the extensive chapter in Klein 2014, 233–301.

52 Of course, in 12th and 13th century literature such pejorative conceptions of the East and its non-Christian inhabitants are associated with the historical background of the Crusades. In ‘Herzog Ernst’, this context is made explicit by the protagonist’s intention to join the Crusades. When the story progresses, Ernst actually reaches his original goal, Jerusalem, and proves himself as a successful *miles christi*. The relevance of contemporary crusade-patterns for the ‘Herzog Ernst’ are focussed on by Goerlitz, who describes the ‘punktuelle[n] Partizipation des mittelhochdeutschen Epos an einem auch später noch verbreiteten Diskurs über die Heiden, der für Kreuzzugsaufrüfer, Kreuzzugsberichte sowie theologische Abhandlungen kennzeichnend ist’ (Goerlitz 2009, 77).

53 The descriptions of the waterworks in both novels share an ambivalent perspective on their artificial conception. This can be seen in the repeated explanation that they are made with *list*. Even though the Middle High German term *list* does not have the present meaning of betrayal, but of mental and technical skills, it is not exclusively a positive term. It refers to a critical discourse on art, especially non-Christian art, where the self-authorization to be a creator and the technical mastery over nature remain suspicious. See also Schnyder, who points out that the numerous ‘Künstliche Paradiese’ in medieval novels own a somewhat paradisiacal quality, but always remain in opposition to the true Christian paradise: ‘Es sind Kunst-Produkte, die die imaginative Leerstelle des christlich-religiösen Paradieses füllen, sich davon aber durch die ausgestellte Artifizialität, die oft auch magische (und pharmakologische) Mittel mit einschließt, absetzen’ (Schnyder 2010, 74).

Bibliography

Primary sources

- Putzo 2015: C. Putzo, Konrad Fleck ›Flore und Blanscheflur‹. Text und Untersuchungen, Münchener Texte und Untersuchungen zur deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters 143 (Berlin 2015).
- Sowinski 1979: Herzog Ernst, In der mittelhochdeutschen Fassung B nach der Ausgabe von K. Bartsch mit den Bruchstücken der Fassung A, edited and translated by B. Sowinski (Stuttgart 1979).
- Weber – Gryson 2007: Biblia Sacra. Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem adiuvantibus B. Fischer, I. Gribomont, H. F. D. Sparks, W. Thiele. Recensuit et brevi apparatu critico instruxit R. Weber. Editionem quintam emendatam retractatam praeeparavit R. Gryson ⁵(Nördlingen 2007).

Secondary literature

- Angenendt 2005: A. Angenendt, Geschichte der Religiosität im Mittelalter ³(Darmstadt 2005).
- Baisch 2012: M. Baisch, Immersion und Faszination im höfischen Roman, in: H. Bleumer – S. Kaplan (ed.), Immersion im Mittelalter, Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik 167 (Berlin 2012), 63–81.
- Bandmann 1951: G. Bandmann, Mittelalterliche Architektur als Bedeutungsträger (Berlin 1951).
- Becker 2003: H.-J. Becker, Gottesurteil, in: R.-H. Bautier (ed.), Lexikon des Mittelalters IV ²(Munich 2003), 1594–1595.
- Behr 2011: H.-J. Behr, Herzog Ernst, in: H. Brunner (ed.), Mittelhochdeutsche Romane und Heldenepen (Stuttgart 2011) 59–74.
- Bowden 2012: S. Bowden, A False Down: The Grippia Episode in Three Versions of *Herzog Ernst*, Oxford German Studies 41, 1, 2012, 15–31.
- Bumke 2000: J. Bumke, Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte des „Herzog Ernst“ und zu einer Neuausgabe des „Herzog Ernst“ A, Zeitschrift für Deutsche Philologie 199, 2000, 410–415.
- Classen 2011: A. Classen, The Symbolic Meaning of Water in Medieval Literature: A Comparative Approach, Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch 46, 2011, 245–267.
- Classen 2017: A. Classen, The “Dirty Middle Ages”: Bathing and Cleanliness in the Middle Ages. With an Empahsis on Medieval German Courtly Romances, Early Modern Novels, and Art History: Another Myth-Buster, in: A. Classen (ed.) Bodily and Spiritual Hygiene in Medieval and Early Modern Literature (Berlin 2017) 458–500.
- Dahm-Kruse 2016: M. Dahm-Kruse, *Diu falsche minne niemen lât/ komen dar sie kâmen* – Minne zwischen christlicher Fügung und künstlerischer Verhandlung in Konrad Flecks ‚Flore und Blanscheflur‘, Euphorion 110, 2016, 355–387.
- Egidi 2005: M. Egidi, Implikationen von Literatur und Kunst in ‚Flore und Blanscheflur‘, in: B. Kellner – P. Strohschneider – F. Wenzel (eds.), Geltung der Literatur. Formen ihrer Autorisierung und Legitimierung im Mittelalter, Philologische Studien und Quellen 190 (Berlin 2005) 163–186.
- Ennen 1980: E. Ennen, Die Forschungsproblematik Bürger und Stadt – von der Terminologie her gesehen, in: J. Fleckenstein (ed.), Über Bürger, Stadt und städtische Literatur im Spätmittelalter. Bericht über Kolloquien der Kommission zur Erforschung der Kultur des Spätmittelalters 1975–1977, Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philologisch-Historische Klasse 121 (Göttingen 1980) 9–26.
- Ernst 2007: U. Ernst, Virtuelle Gärten in der mittelalterlichen Literatur. Anschauungsmodelle und symbolische Projektionen, in: E. Vavra (ed.), Imaginäre Räume. Sektion B des internationalen Kongresses “Virtuelle Räume. Raumwahrnehmung und Raumvorstellung im Mittelalter”, Krems an der Donau, 24. bis 26. März 2003, Sitzungsberichte (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-Historische Klasse) 758 = Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Realienkunde des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit 19 (Wien 2007) 155–190.
- Goerlitz 2009: U. Goerlitz, »... Ob sie heiden synt ader cristen ...«. Figurationen von Kreuzzug und Heidenkampf in deutschen und lateinischen *Herzog Ernst*- Fassungen des Hoch- und Spätmittelalters (HE B, C und F), in: U. Goerlitz (ed.), Integration oder Desintegration? Heiden und Christen im Mittelalter (Stuttgart 2009) 65–104.
- Haupt 2006: B. Haupt, Von der bewaffneten Pilgerfahrt zur Entdeckungsreise. Die mittelhochdeutsche Dichtung Herzog Ernst, in: B. Haupt – W. G. Busse (eds.), Pilgerreisen in Mittelalter und Renaissance (Düsseldorf 2006) 67–92.
- Haupt 2008: B. Haupt, Ein Herzog in Fernost. Zu *Herzog Ernst A/B*, in: M. Curschmann – J.-M. Valentin (eds.), Bild, Rede, Schrift, Jahrbuch für internationale Germanistik. Reihe A, 83 (Bern 2008) 157–168.
- Hengel 2000: M. Hengel, Die »auserwählte Herrin«, die »Braut«, die »Mutter« und die »Gottesstadt«, in: M. Hengel – S. Mittmann – A. M. Schwemer (eds.), La Cité de Dieu, Die Stadt Gottes, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 129 (Tübingen 2000) 245–285.

- Huber-Rebenich et al. 2017: G. Huber-Rebenich – C. Rohr – M. Stolz, Zur Einleitung: Wasser in der mittelalterlichen Kultur, in: G. Huber-Rebenich – C. Rohr – M. Stolz (eds.), Wasser in der mittelalterlichen Kultur. Gebrauch – Wahrnehmung – Symbolik, Das Mittelalter. Beihefte 4 (Berlin 2017) 1–16.
- Klein 2014: M. Klein, Die Farben der Herrschaft. Imagination, Semantik und Poetologie in heldenepischen Texten des deutschen Mittelalters, Literatur – Theorie – Geschichte 5 (Berlin 2012).
- Kugler 1986: H. Kugler, Die Vorstellung der Stadt in der Literatur des deutschen Mittelalters, Münchener Texte und Untersuchungen zur deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters 88 (München 1986).
- Lecouteux 1981: C. Lecouteux, Die Kranichschnäbler der *Herzog Ernst*-Dichtung: Eine mögliche Quelle, Euphorion 75, 1981, 100–102.
- Lilley 2004: K. D. Lilley, Cities of God? Medieval urban forms and their Christian symbolism, in: Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series 29, 2004, 296–313.
- Meier 2017: H.-R. Meier, „Paradies der Erde“ – Wasserinszenierungen in den Normannenpalästen Siziliens, in: G. Huber-Rebenich – C. Rohr – M. Stolz (eds.), Wasser in der mittelalterlichen Kultur. Gebrauch – Wahrnehmung – Symbolik, Das Mittelalter. Beihefte 4 (Berlin 2017) 601–613.
- Miller 1986: N. Miller, Paradise Regained: Medieval Gardens and Fountains, in: E. B. MacDougall (ed.), Medieval gardens, *Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium on the History of Landscape Architecture* 9 (Washington 1986) 137–153.
- Neudeck 2003: O. Neudeck, Erzählen von Kaiser Otto. Zur Fiktionalisierung von Geschichte in mittelhochdeutscher Literatur, Norm und Struktur 18 (München 2000).
- von Reden – Wieland 2015: S. von Reden – C. Wieland, Zur Einführung: Wasser – Alltagsbedarf, Ingenieurskunst und Repräsentation zwischen Antike und Neuzeit, in: S. von Reden – C. Wieland (eds.), Wasser, Alltagsbedarf, Ingenieurskunst und Repräsentation zwischen Antike und Neuzeit, Umwelt und Gesellschaft 14 (Göttingen 2015) 9–25.
- Said 1978: E. W. Said, *Orientalism* (London 1978).
- Schnyder 2010: M. Schnyder, „Daz ander paradise“. Künstliche Paradiese in der Literatur des Mittelalters, in: C. Benthien – M. Gerlof (eds.), *Paradies. Topografien der Sehnsucht, Literatur, Kultur, Geschlecht. Kleine Reihe 27* (Köln 2010) 63–75.
- Smith 2017: J. L. Smith, Caring for the Body and Soul with Water: Gueric of Igny's *Fourth Sermon on the Epiphany*, Godfrey of Saint-Victor's *Fons Philosophiae*, and Peter of Celle's Letters, in: A. Classen (ed.), *Bodily and Spiritual Hygiene in Medieval and Early Modern Literature* (Berlin 2017) 148–170.
- Smith 2018: J. L. Smith, *Water in Medieval Intellectual Culture. Case Studies from Twelfth-Century Monasticism* (Turnhout 2018).
- Stock 2002: M. Stock, Kombinationssinn. Narrative Strukturexperimente im „Straßburger Alexander“, im „Herzog Ernst B“ und im „König Rother“, Münchener Texte und Untersuchungen zur deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters 123 (Tübingen 2002).
- Stoltmann 2008: D. Stoltmann, Jerusalem. Auf die Erde geholter Himmel?, in: U. Müller – W. Wunderlich – M. Springeth – B. Hatheyer (eds.), *Burgen, Länder, Orte, Mittelalter-Mythen 5* (Konstanz 2008) 373–388.
- Szklenar 1966: H. Szklenar, Studien zum Bild des Orients in vorhöfischen deutschen Epen, *Palaestra* 243 (Göttingen 1966).
- Thoss 1972: D. Thoss, Studien zum *Locus Amoenus* im Mittelalter, *Wiener romanistische Arbeiten* 10 (Wien 1972).
- Waltenberger 2003: M. Waltenberger, Diversität und Konversion: Kulturkonstruktionen im französischen und im deutschen Florisroman, in: W. Harms (ed.), *Ordnung und Unordnung in der Literatur des Mittelalters* (Stuttgart 2003) 25–43.
- Wandhoff 2003: H. Wandhoff, Ekphrasis. Kunstbeschreibungen und virtuelle Räume in der Literatur des Mittelalters, *Trends in medieval philology* 3 (Berlin 2003).
- Wandhoff 2006: H. Wandhoff, Bilder der Liebe – Bilder des Todes. Konrad Flecks *Flore-Roman* und die Kunstbeschreibungen in der höfischen Epik des deutschen Mittelalters, in: C. Ratkowitsch (ed.), *Die poetische Ekphrasis von Kunstwerken. Eine literarische Tradition der Großdichtung in Antike, Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit, Sitzungsberichte. Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-Historische Klasse 735* (Wien 2006) 55–76.