

ECP 2005 CULT 038097/Bernstein

BERNSTEIN

Deliverable no. 33, ref. D6.7 Exhibition

Deliverable number	<i>D6.7</i>
Dissemination level	<i>Public</i>
Delivery date	<i>28 February 2009</i>
Status	<i>Final</i>
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eContentplus

This project is funded under the *eContentplus* programme¹,
a multiannual Community programme to make digital content in Europe more accessible, usable and exploitable.

¹ OJ L 79, 24.3.2005, p. 1.

Introduction

When the project proposal was written in the year 2005, we planned to arrange one exhibition at the end of the project in Vienna to celebrate and demonstrate the project's results. But then things changed. The first exhibition in Stuttgart, Germany, was followed by four more and this series will continue upon the project's end. It turns out that these exhibitions are the most effective dissemination activity of Bernstein. The exhibitions generated much more response from the media than other activities and they allowed us to reach a wide range of audience. We decided to organize a symposium for the presentation of Bernstein and the launch of the Bernstein portal instead of an exhibition at the end of the project. This was decided due to the fact that the exhibition was already hosted in Vienna in 2007 at *Schottenstift* and all appropriate locations were not available at the scheduled time.

Scope of the exhibition

The exhibition "Ochsenkopf und Meerjungfrau" (ital.: Testa di bue e sirena, engl.: Bull's Head and Mermaid) is dedicated to a special treasure within the framework of paper history research: watermarks. Visible when holding any bank note against the light, watermarks were produced in a myriad of shapes from the 13th century onwards when they were first invented in Europe. They are an excellent mean to date unidentified documents (e.g. a manuscript of the composer Mozart) or to authenticate works of art (e.g. an etching signed "Rembrandt").

A concise and profound introduction to watermarks, techniques of paper manufacture and the scientific study of papers in general is presented to the public. A special section deals with the watermarks analyzed with regard to medieval symbolism. The importance of watermarks for paleography is also underlined. Watermark scholars and watermark collections in Europe receive a due share of focus, while the digital presentation of watermarks of several European databases establishes the connection between past and present.

Exhibition history

The exhibition "Ochsenkopf und Meerjungfrau. Wasserzeichen des Mittelalters" has had an international "career". After it was shown at the *Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart* from December 2006 to February 2007, it was presented from March to June 2007 at *Schottenstift* in Vienna. An expanded Italian version (title: "Testa di bue e sirena. La memoria della carta e delle filigrane dal medioevo al seicento") moved to Italy, where it was presented from July to August 2007 at the *Museo della Carta e della Filigrana* in Fabriano, followed by a show from September to October 2007 at the *Istituto centrale per il restauro e la conservazione del patrimonio archivistico e librario* in Rome. 2008 the exhibition was just presented at the *Biblioteca Trivulziana* (Castello Sforzesco) in Milan, before it will move 2009 to the *Biblioteca Nazionale* in Turin and – in an English version – to the *Koninklijke Bibliotheek* in The Hague.

The exhibit was originally conceived as a joint project between the *Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg* and the *Commission of Paleography and Codicology of Medieval Manuscripts* of the *Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna*. Accordingly, the first edition of the accompanying catalogue focused on watermarks of the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, the catalogue spanned a wide range of other topics, including the history of paper and research on manuscripts, a presentation of the major watermark collections, current watermark databases and digitized images.

After the exhibit was incorporated into the project “Bernstein – The Memory of Paper”, the exhibit and the catalogue were expanded, as could already be seen in the Italian version: not only did it contain four prefaces instead of one; the topics being examined were also broadened with regard to the time period, the regions under consideration and the methodology. The incorporation of artistic testimony, drawings and prints, especially from the sixteenth century, went hand in hand with a more comprehensive examination of the history of paper in Italy. In addition, the different technical possibilities for reproducing watermarks were introduced and the presentation of the databases was supplemented with the new material they had incorporated in the interim. Amendments were also made to the general bibliography on the history of paper and watermarks.

With a third expanded edition, the exhibition’s catalogue has finally become an independent compendium. It’s title, “Bull’s Head and Mermaid. The History of Paper and Watermarks from the Middle Ages to the Modern Period”, is a direct successor of the previous versions, but expands upon them considerably. In addition to the longer time period, the focus of the previous volumes has been expanded with new articles and consolidated within the framework of the “Bernstein Project”. Paper production in the Netherlands during the modern period is examined, as well as the transition to the industrial production of paper. Contributions dealing with methodology examine the relationships found between watermarks, as well as research on manuscripts and incunabula, and in musicology and cartography. The various means of recording watermarks is also dealt with in a separate article. The original list of watermark collections and collectors has been amended with additional relevant names as well as the watermark databases.



Figure 1: Cover sheets of the German, Italian, and English catalogues.

List of Exhibitions

1. Dec. 2006-Feb. 2nd, 2007 – “Ochsenkopf und Meerjungfrau. Wasserzeichen des Mittelalters”, *Landesarchiv Baden Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart*, Germany, and *Kommission für Schrift- und Buchwesen des Mittelalters, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Vienna, Austria.
2. March 22nd, -June 9th, 2007 – “Ochsenkopf und Meerjungfrau. Wasserzeichen des Mittelalters”, *Museum im Schottenstift*, Vienna, Austria.
3. July 9th, -August 24th, 2007 – “Testa di bue e la sirena. Filigrane del Medioevo”, *Museo della Carta e della Filigrana*, Fabriano, Italy.
4. Sep. 8th, -Oct. 10th, 2007 – “Testa di bue e la sirena. Filigrane del Medioevo”, *Istituto centrale per la patologia del libro*, Rome, Italy.
5. Oct. 28th, -Dec. 31st, 2008 – “Una firma nell’acqua – La memoria della carta e delle filigrane dal Medioevo all’età moderna”, *Archivio Storico Civico e Biblioteca Trivulziana*, Milan, Italy.

Next Exhibitions:

- April/May 2009 – *Biblioteca Nazionale*, Turin, Italy.
- Autumn 2009 – *Stiftung Zanders*, Bergisch Gladbach, Germany.
- Autumn 2009 – *Koninklijke Bibliotheek*, The Hague, Netherlands.
- Autumn/Winter 2009 – ...

Photo Documentation



Figure 2: Exhibition at the *Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg*, Stuttgart, Germany.

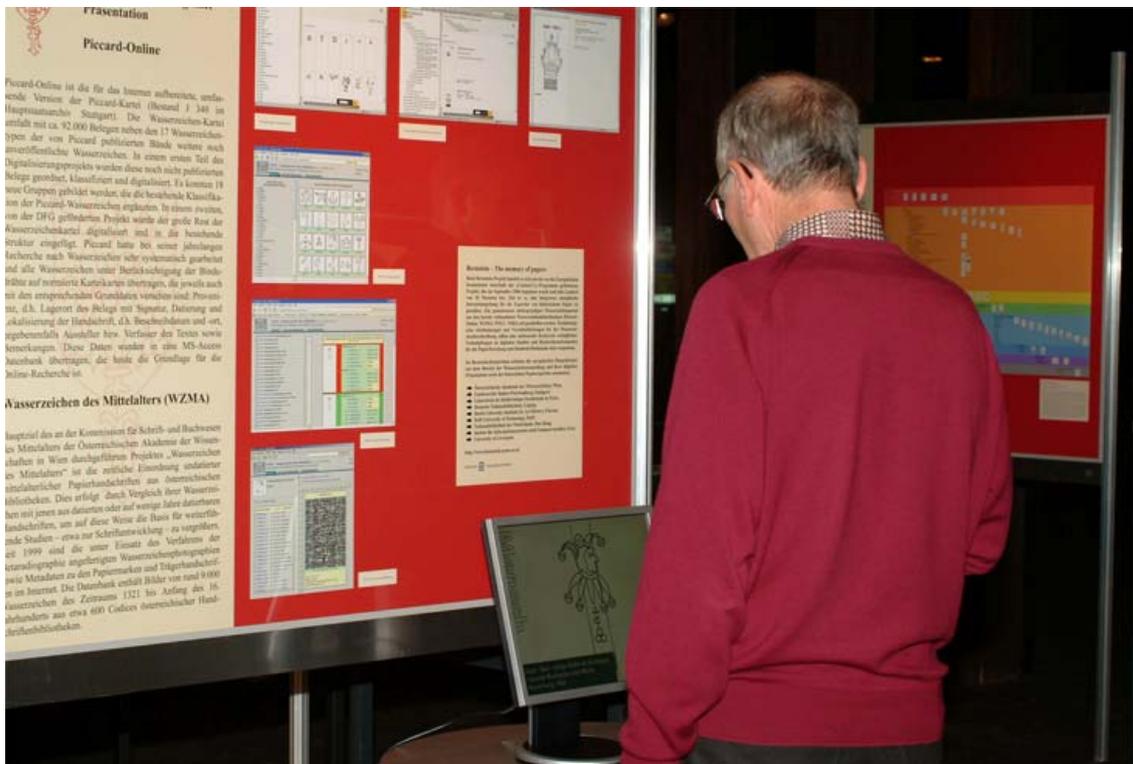


Figure 3: Exhibition at the *Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg*, Stuttgart, Germany.



Figure 4: Exhibition at *Schottenstift* in Vienna, Austria.



Figure 5: Exhibition at *Schottenstift* in Vienna, Austria.



Figure 8: Exhibition at the *Istituto centrale per la patologia del libro*, Rome, Italy.



Figure 9: Exhibition at the *Istituto centrale per la patologia del libro*, Rome, Italy.



Figure 10: Exhibition at Archivio Storico Civico e Biblioteca Trivulziana, Milan, Italy.



Figure 11: Exhibition at Archivio Storico Civico e Biblioteca Trivulziana, Milan, Italy.



Figure 12: Exhibition at Archivio Storico Civico e Biblioteca Trivulziana, Milan, Italy.