Description of the exhibition:

„Ochsenkopf und Meerjungfrau. Wasserzeichen des Mittelalters" (Bull's head and mermaid. Medieval watermarks.)

This exhibition is dedicated to a special treasure within the framework of paper history research: watermarks. A variety of watermark motives was used since the later Middle Ages in paper produced in Europe. Watermarks offer useful and decisive information as for the quality of paper. Yet also the time of paper manufacturing and the place of paper production can be deduced from watermarks. Hence, filigranology became an important instrument for dating medieval manuscripts.

In connection with work on the BERNSTEIN project, which is financed by the European Commission, the Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg (Stuttgart, Germany) and the Austrian Academy of Sciences (Vienna, Austria) present a concise and profound introduction to watermarks through their touring exhibition. As regards content, paper history in general and techniques of paper manufacturing in the Middle Ages are considered. Moreover, the watermarks are analyzed against the background of medieval symbolism. The importance of watermarks for palaeography is underlined in a particular chapter. Since the Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg has one of the largest watermark collections in safekeeping (Gerhard Piccard, 1909-1989) there is also a focus on watermark collectors and watermark collections in Europe. Establishing the connection between the Middle Ages and the present, the digital presentation of watermarks through several European databases is also a chief subject of the exhibition. A catalogue with detailed scientific information serves to deepen the various aspects shown through the exhibition.

Technicalities:

1.   Required space: - ca. 150 sq.m.

2.   Equipment: - ca. 8 display boards (partly 1.35 m, partly 1.00 m broad)
- ca. 15 sq.m. display area (flat or high glas cabinet)
- PC workstation
- eventually, didactic station: paper scooping/watermarks copying

3.   Publication: - firstly, German, multilingual translations intended
- extensions possible
- extent: 72 pages, ca. 30 figures (color/bw)

Contents (with explanations)

I.   Introduction (What is a watermark? Who is dealing with that? Watermarks in the literature)
reproductions: watermarks in bank notes, watermarks in paper, Bartolus de Saxoferrato

II.   Paper making in the Middle Ages (history of paper, how was paper made)
reproductions: paper scooping (Diderot, Jost Ammann)
exhibits: 'old' paper (before 1380 AD) / `new´ paper (15th century)

samples: HstAS

III.   The world in watermarks (Which watermarks existed in the Middle Ages? What do they mean?)
reproductions: watermark classification (E. Ornato), watermark types
exhibits: `Wappenbuch´ (e.g. Mömpelgarder Genealogie) a.o. authentic samples with watermark symbols

IV.   Watermarks and manuscripts research (geographic distribution of certain watermarks, prominent examples of dating by watermarks)
reproductions: distribution maps of watermarks and paper trade
exhibits: ca. 6 manuscripts from Stuttgart (Germany) and Vienna (Austria) each, shown alternatingly in original resp. in reproduction, additionally Piccard drawings resp. beta radiographies (e.g. Stuttgart pack of cards; Visconti certificate)

V.   Watermark collectors and their collections (Briquet, Piccard et. al.)
reproductions: collectors portraits, watermark repertories (each 1 page)
exhibits: watermark maps from Piccard's collection, watermark repertories (Piccard, Briquet), paper collections

VI.   Watermarks in digital representation (Piccard, WZMA, WILC)
reproductions: (ca. 8) screen shots (from the presentations)
2 PC workstations: 1 multimedia presentation / 1 data recall