

2012-11-29

Haltern Chess Exhibition



An overall pleasing Sunday morning

Last Sunday (25/11/2012) the opening of the chess exhibition in Haltern am See took place where I had been invited to by Mrs Eva Masthoff. The background story is easily told.

In the last months, the author and journalist Eva Masthoff as well as her husband Dr. Horstfried Masthoff (founder of the [Kulturstiftung Masthoff](#) in Haltern) dealt with the preparation of two book chapters on chess bookplates, and in the course of her research work Mrs Masthoff had contacted me whereupon some e-mails had been exchanged about chess in general and ex libris in particular. Later on I gladly accepted her invitation to the Haltern chess exhibition as (inter alia) it gave me the opportunity to write this pictorial report for our website, and Haltern is only one hour's drive off from Meerbusch. I am also still grateful to Mrs Masthoff that she had warned me the day before against a starlings' nest box (Starenkasten) on the way into town, maybe otherwise I had fallen into that non-chess trap. (In Germany starlings' nest boxes are preferentially installed on tremendously wide roads with an incomprehensibly low speed limit.)

Arrived at Haltern's public library, I was cordially received by Mr and Mrs Masthoff, and I could shake quite a lot of hands, also of members of the chess club Königsspringer Haltern 1962 whose 50th anniversary was celebrated with this exhibition. Naturally at the start of the event some short welcoming speeches were given by several officials who also appreciated the intensive commitment of all those involved in the realization of the exhibition. I will only give here the names and add the photos, the reader will find more substantial content in the jubilee book which also contains some forewords by the speakers.

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Bodo Klimpel, Mayor

of Haltern am See and patron of the event

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Thomas Knuth,
Chairman of the SV Königsspringer Haltern 1962 e.V., with the new publication *Haltener
Schachspiegeleien...*

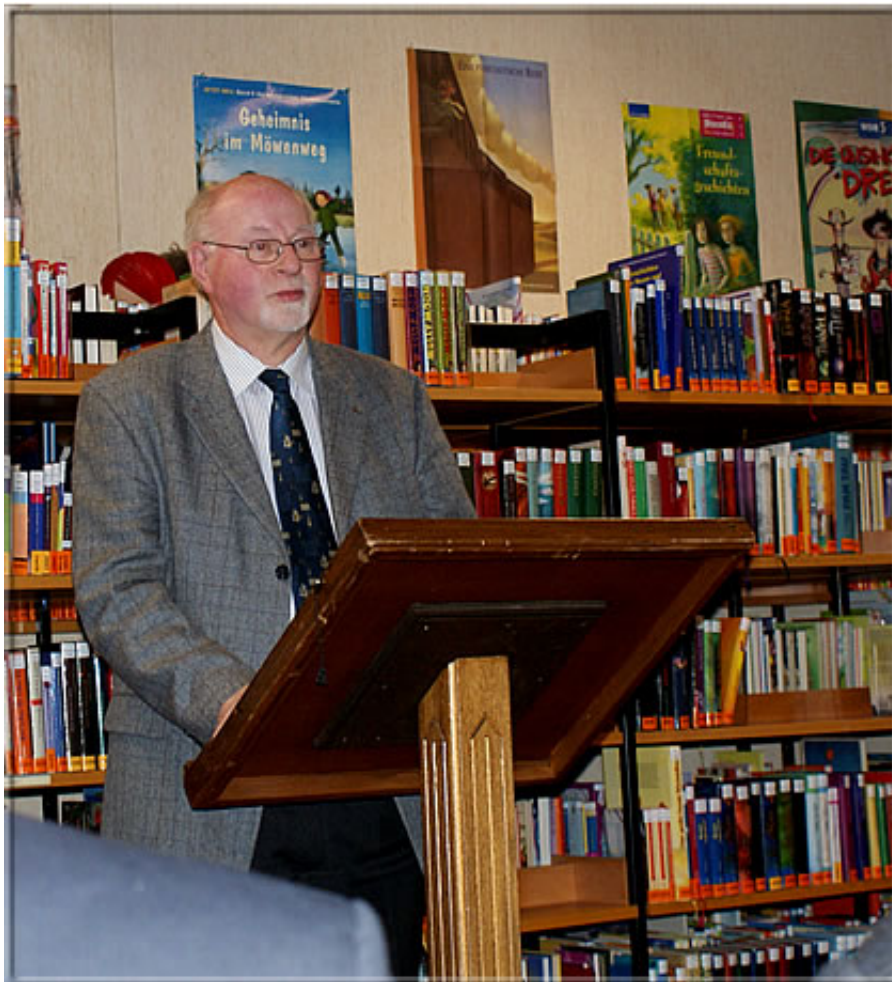
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Heinrich Schriewer, Chairman of the City

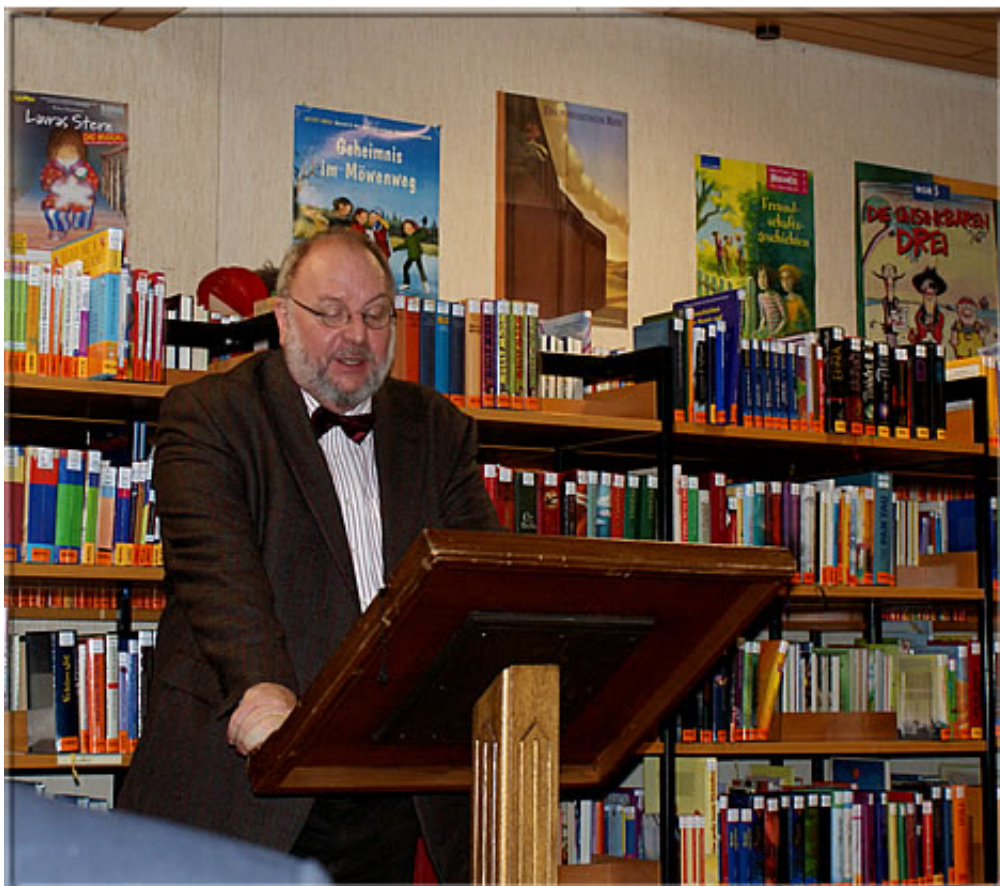
Sports Association

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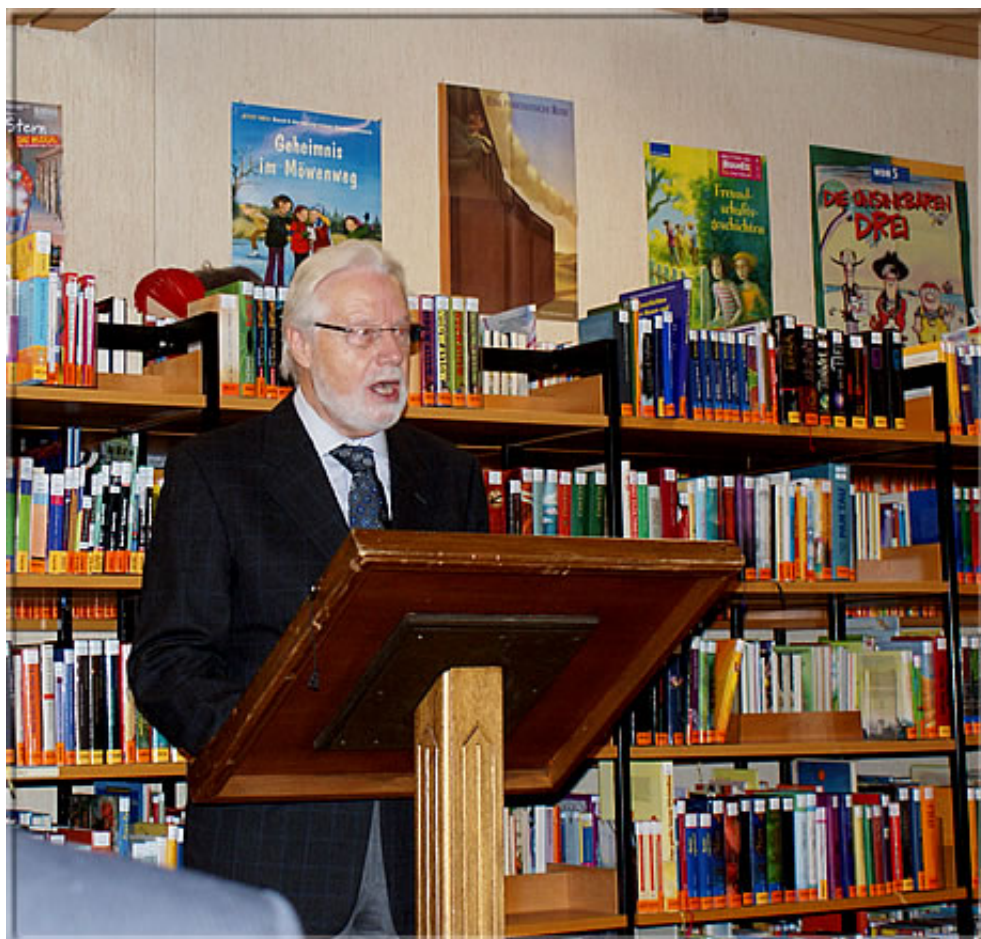
Wolfgang Kölnberger,
Chairman of the Chess Association Ruhrgebiet e.V.

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Bernhard E.
Köster, Director of the Public Library Haltern am See

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Dieter Stüber,

Creative Director and Organizer of the exhibition

In view of the early Sunday morning hour (start at 10 am) the event was very well-attended, after the speeches most visitors moved to the basement of the public library where the chess exhibition was housed and where the guests could take some refreshment (beverages and snacks). I was pleasantly surprised then by the exhibition, as the collectibles provided largely by Haltern citizens were most remarkable, and it is very meritorious what a comparatively small local chess club (with only about 60 members) has achieved here together with helpers and sponsors. Similar applies to the beautiful and recommendable jubilee book (see our announcement [Halturner Schachspiegeleien ...](#)) which was offered (fresh from the press) in the exhibition hall – I was very pleased to receive a copy from the hands of Mrs Masthoff. Additionally it should be mentioned that the chess club offered a little competition for the visitors (i.e. to solve a not so hard chess problem with an ornamental constellation of the pieces).

Naturally the exhibition in Haltern is not comparable with (for instance) the chess exhibition in Hamburg 2005 (see [Outstanding Chess Exhibition in Hamburg](#)) which was realized by a big chess club and with the assistance of Chess Collectors International – such a comparison would be unfair. On the basis of the photos below the reader will get an idea of the Haltern event which certainly has exceeded the expectations of most visitors.

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• The reprint of a wonderful old chess book: **Tractatus de Ludo Scacorum**.

„Tractatus de Ludo Scacorum“

Vit. 25 - 6 – Biblioteca Nacional de España (Madrid)

Die Originalhandschrift des hier gezeigten wertvollen Faksimiles gehört zu einer Gruppe von Handschriften, die im ersten Viertel des 15. Jahrhunderts in Prag, im Umfeld des Hofes Wenzel IV. (1378-1419), entstanden sind. Der elegante, nur 17,5 x 11,5 cm große Codex zählt zu den schönsten abendländischen „Schachhandschriften“, die wir kennen. Der in schönen gotischen Lettern ausgeführte Text steht in enger Beziehung zu dem berühmten Schachwerk des Dominikanermönchs **Jacobus de Cessolis**, das dieser vor 1330 verfasste. Cessolis Werk beruht auf von ihm gehaltenen Predigten, in denen er das Schachspiel als Allegorie der Gesellschaft heranzog. Die Schachfiguren repräsentieren dabei die einzelnen Stände der Gesellschaft. Entscheidend war, dass die „edlen“ Figuren, wie der König, nicht alleine herrschen konnten und auf die Mithilfe der gemeinen Figuren, den Bauern, angewiesen sind. Um das zu verdeutlichen, belegte Cessolis alle Bauern, die er Venden (Fußgänger) nannte, sogar mit Berufsbezeichnungen (Schmied, Kaufmann, Arzt etc.), um ihre Rolle zu betonen.

Der Benediktinermönch **Konrad von Ammenhausen** übertrug Cessolis Werk um 1337 in Form einer Reimchronik ins Deutsche.

Doch trotz offensichtlicher Analogien handelt es sich bei dem hier gezeigten „**Tractatus de Ludo Scacorum**“ um ein eigenständiges Werk, das sich in vielen Teilen deutlich von Cessolis Vorlage unterscheidet.

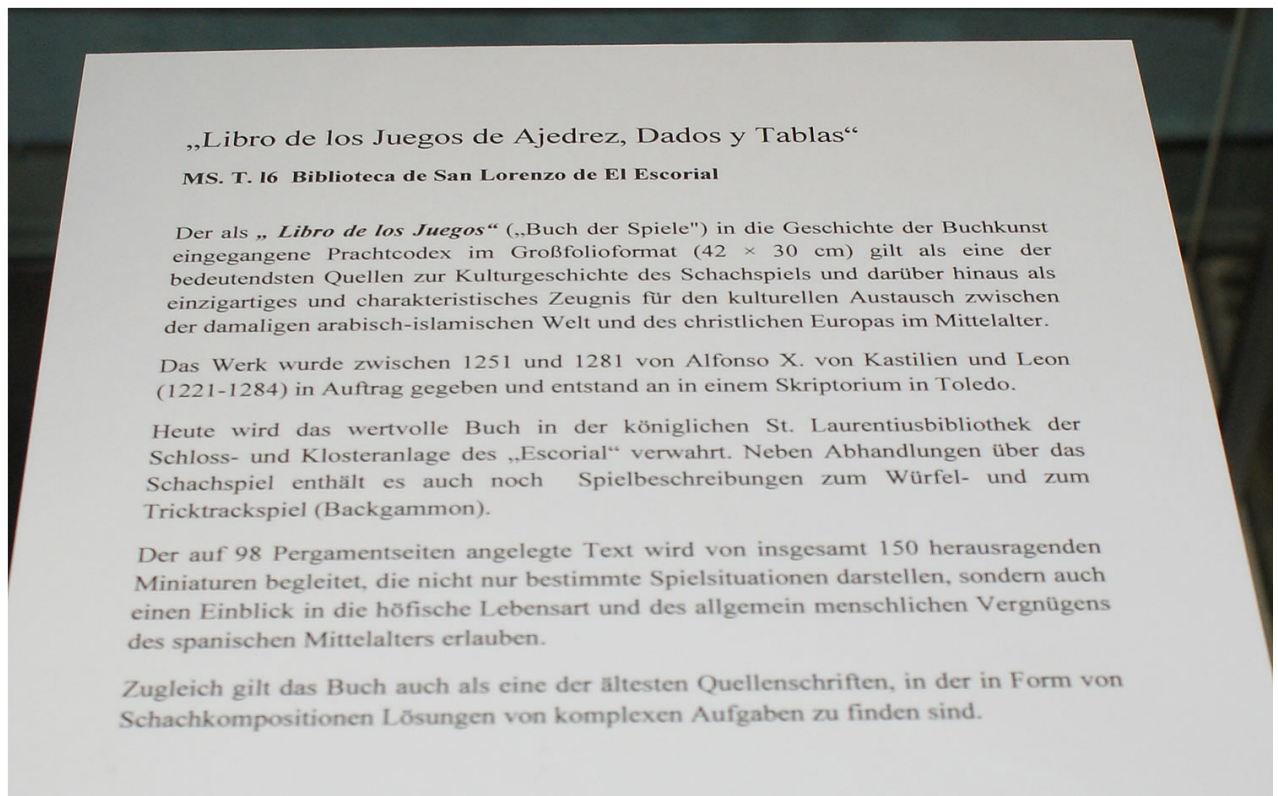
Der in acht Kapitel unterteilte Text wird von 15 Miniaturen begleitet, die auf höchstem künstlerischen Niveau der Zeit ausgeführt wurden.

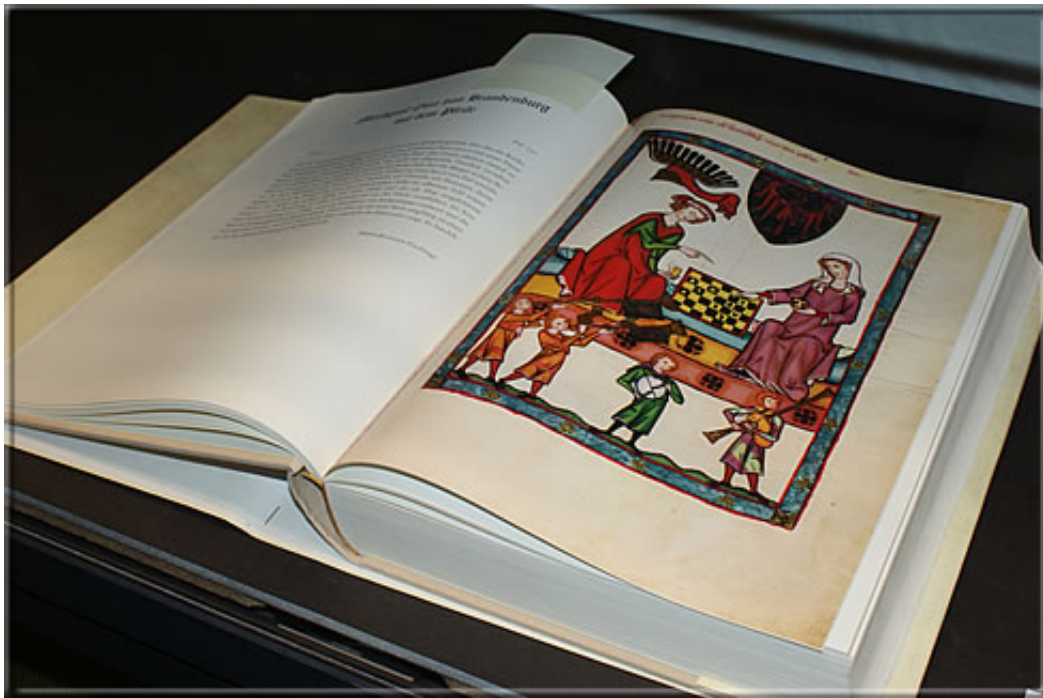
Inhalt der acht Kapitel:

1. Von seiner Erfindung
2. Warum das Schachbrett die Stadt Babylon darstellt
3. Warum das Schachbrett zwei gegnerische Königreiche darstellt
4. Die Bedeutung der Schachfiguren
5. Wie die Stellung der Schachfiguren dich lehrt, wie man ein Lager errichtet
6. Wie die Züge der Schachfiguren dich lehren, gerade und lobenswerte Maßnahmen zu ergreifen
7. Wie die Züge der Schachfiguren dich lehren, die Schlachtenlinien in einer Armee zu organisieren
8. Wie die verborgenen Züge der Schachfiguren dich lehren, wie Armeen aufeinandertreffen



The most valuable item of the exhibition, a gorgeous facsimile of the Codex Alfonso. [Click to enlarge.](#)





of the Codex Manesse

All miniatures

Sämtliche Miniaturen der Manesse-Liederhandschrift / Hrsg. von Ingo F. Walther unter Mitarb. von Kurt Martin – Aachen [u.a.] : Georgi - Kleiner [u.a.], 1981. - 375 S., [274 Bl.] Ill.



wine (in a magnum bottle) and chess.

The tempting combination of red



Chess sets

from the Esterwegen concentration camp in the Emsland.



Langhoff, Wolfgang:
Die Moorsoldaten : 13 Monate Konzentrationslager ; unpolitischer
Tatsachenbericht / Wolfgang Langhoff. - 6. Aufl. - Zürich :
Schweizer-Spiegel, 1935. - 327 S. - Ill.

Langhoff, Wolfgang:

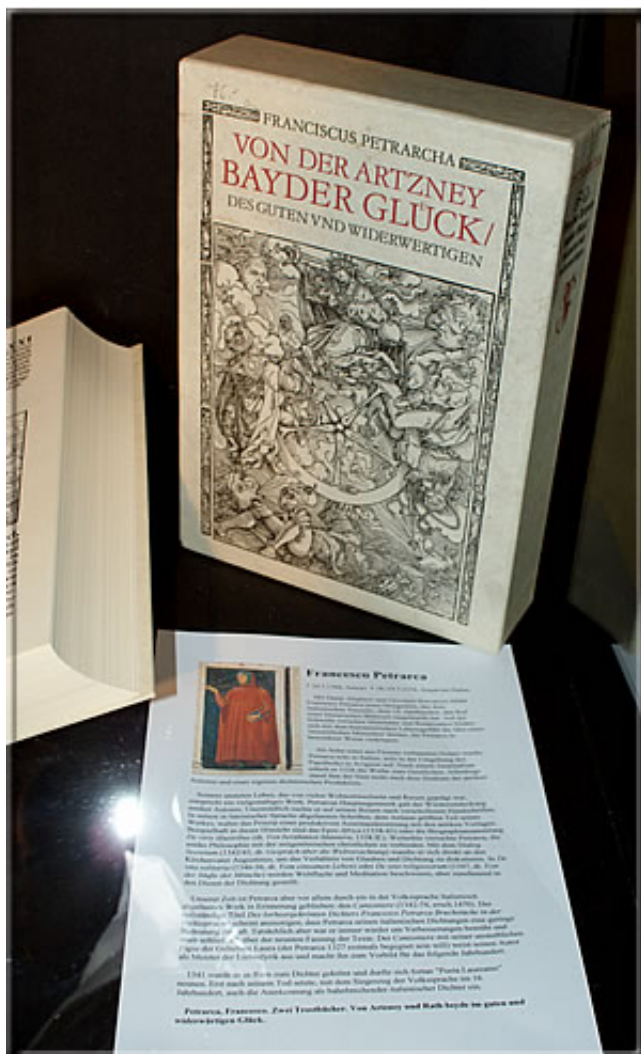
Die Moorsoldaten : 13 Monate Konzentrationslager ; unpolitischer
Tatsachenbericht / Wolfgang Langhoff. - 6. Aufl. - Zürich :
Schweizer-Spiegel, 1935. - 327 S. : Ill.



[Click to enlarge.](#)

König, Eberhard:

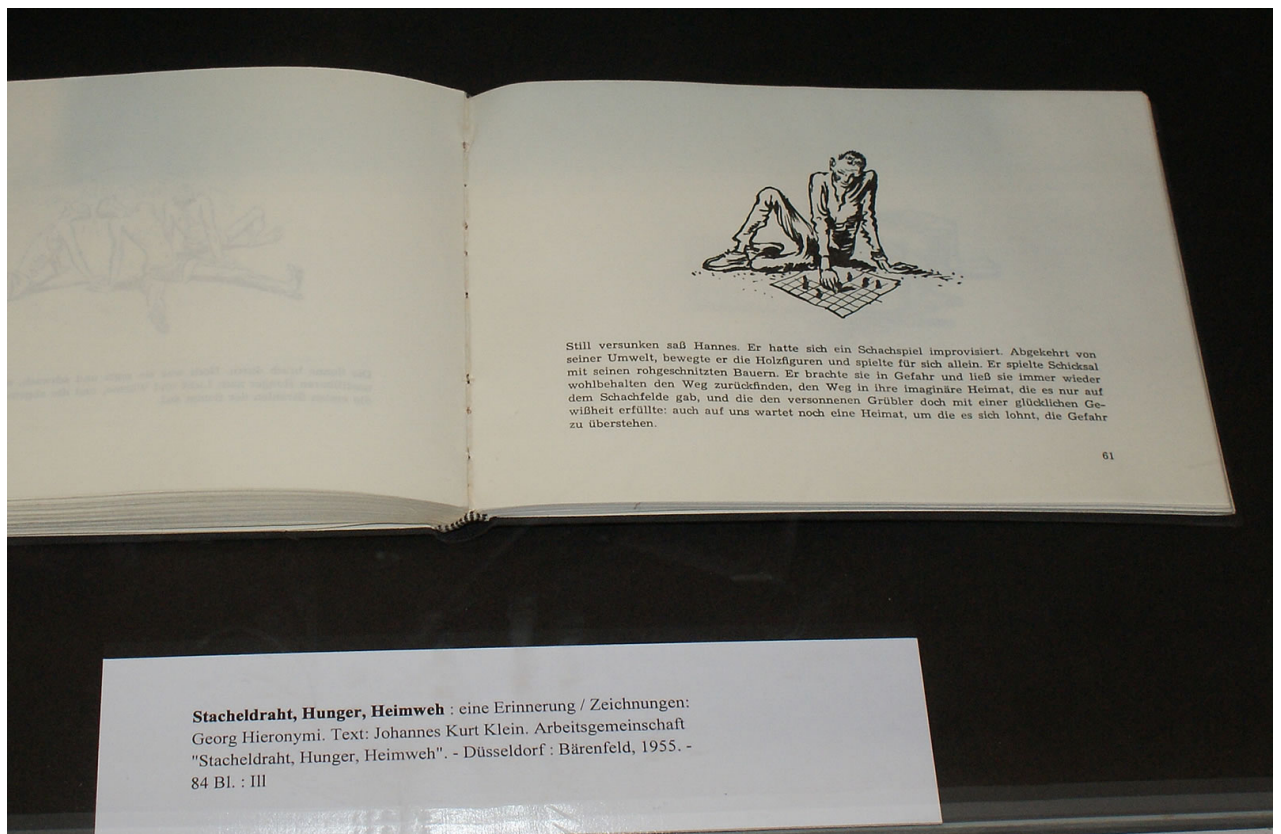
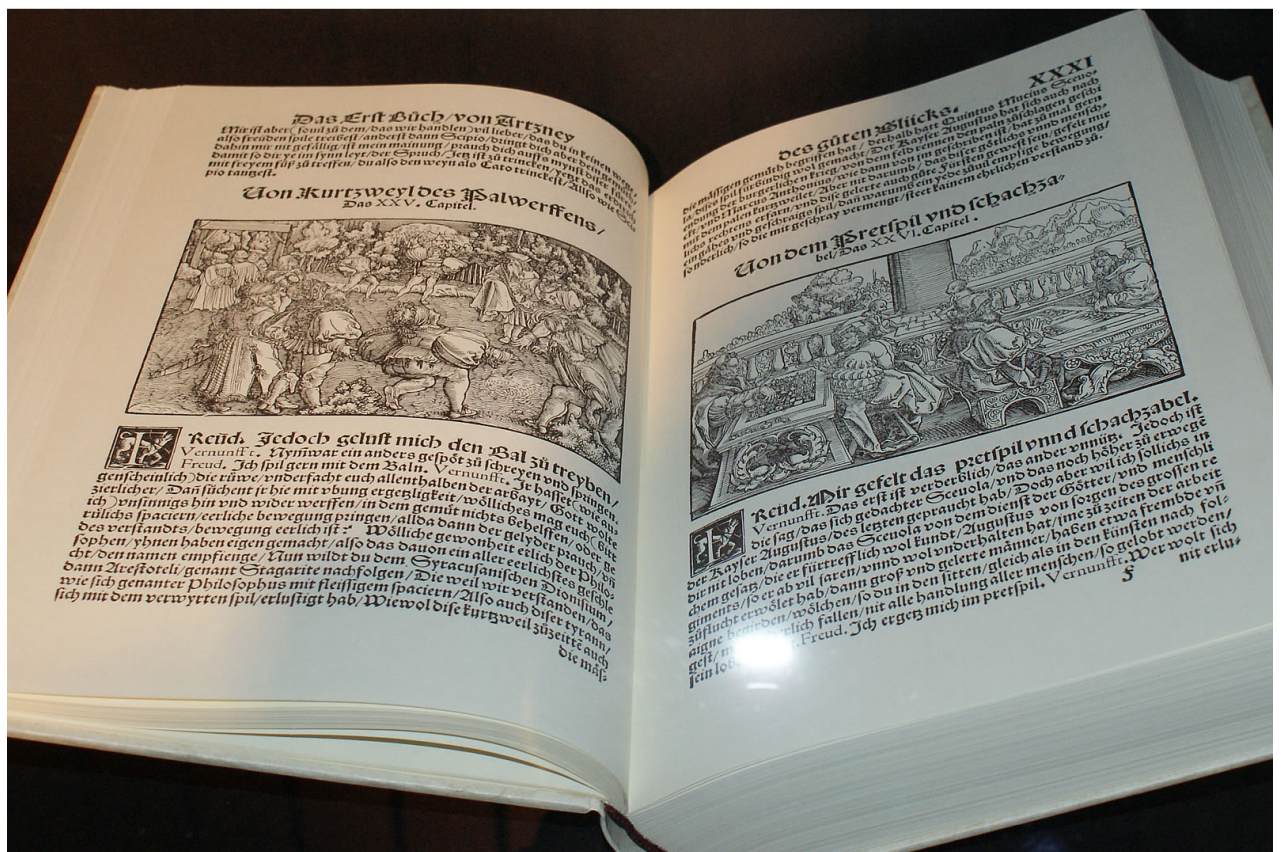
Boccaccio, Decameron: alle 100 Miniaturen der ersten
 Bilderhandschrift / Eberhard König. - Stuttgart [u.a.] : Belser, 1989. -
 254 S. : Ill.



[Click to enlarge detail.](#)

Petrarca, Francesco:

Von der Artzney bayder Glück, des guten und widerwertigen /
Franciscus Petrarca. Hrsg. u. kommentiert von Manfred Lemmer. -
Neudr. d. Ausg. Heinrich Steiner 1532 - Hamburg : Wittig, 1984. -
209 S





Chess set "Alice in Wonderland" (Click to enlarge)

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Schachttisch: Intarsienarbeit, erworben auf einem Antikmarkt 2007, Figuren: Kunststoff
 Herkunft: Hannover
 Freundliche Leihgabe von Dr. Peter Schmid
 Erworben 2009 auf dem Antikmarkt in Hannover.

A goodly collection of altogether 132 bookplates could be admired in the exhibition. The ex-libris in the red frames are on loan from the [German Ex-libris Society](http://www.exlibris-society.de/).

Always click small photos to enlarge:



— Frame with some bookplates of the Dane Erik Skovenborg
www.skovenborg.dk/Exlibris_Bookplates.html



_ Friedrich Wolfenter's specialty is the painstaking ex-libris creation with help of a typewriter: each bookplate is composed of a multitude of typed letters ("x" with colon), see www.wolfenter.de/Exlibris.htm.





H. Pape



Helfenbein, Walter
Technik / C3



Blossfeld, Karl
Technik / C3



Pape, Hans
Technik / X2



Orzechowska, Maria-Alexandra
Technik / P7





1. Julia Vermeil, CH
Album: Album des Vermeil
Kunstverlag, Zürich, 1999
Kunstverlag, Zürich, 1999
2. Gulyás Mihály, H
Léon-Lévy-Sage, H, 1910
3. Hark Rongere, NL
Die Kette König
Verlag, Verlag, 1910
4. J. M. R. R. R.
Verlag, 1910
5. Maria Wladyslaw L. L.
Verlag, 1910
6. Wladyslaw L. L.
Verlag, 1910
7. J. M. R. R. R.
Verlag, 1910
8. Paul R. R.
Verlag, 1910
9. L. R. R. R.
Verlag, 1910
10. J. M. R. R. R.
Verlag, 1910
11. J. M. R. R. R.
Verlag, 1910



1. J. Binkhorst, NL
"Alleen met de Koning"

6. Erik Skovenborg, DK
"Alleen met de Koning"



I will take the opportunity to deal a little with the bookplate of our late member **Dr. Jean Mennerat** (for Jean Mennerat see our former birthday greetings [2005](#) and [2007](#) as well as our [obituary](#)):



Mrs Masthoff has contacted the French artist Gilles Erny who had prepared the copper engraving for Jean Mennerat and this way learned some informative details about this ex-libris. Generally the bookplate reflects Dr. Mennerat's profession and his varied private passions: The Aesculapian staff with the snake is well-known as a symbol of the medical profession, the chess board with the curved lateral branch can be interpreted as a microscope while the head of the microscope is partly concealed by an ancient Egyptian female head (Pharaoh) whose headdress (crown – an attribute of Kings and Queens only) is again modified by a chess pattern. A plausible explanation for this head would be that it adverts to the old Egyptian medicine which is regarded as the beginning of medical science.

The head-on approaching biplane refers to the fact that Mennerat was an enthusiastic pilot, and the stars in the upper part of the bookplate bear witness to his interest in astronomy. A number of books underneath the chess board (= microscope stage) is self-evident (Mennerat's bibliophily); the fungi (bottom left) which represent - besides animals and plants - an independent realm, as well as the fossil (ammonite) depicted on the right may indicate further fields of interest. Whether the ammonite is also intended as a hidden hint at the Pharaonic empire has to remain unsettled (an etymological connection: Am[m]on was the Greek / Roman name for the Egyptian sun-god Amun-Re, see <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ammoniten>). Beyond question, a fascinating bookplate with interesting details to discover and to discuss.



_ Dieter Stüber closes both eyes while library director Bernhard Köster flirts with Mrs. Masthoff.

You may enjoy 26 further photographs in this [gallery](#)!

(Press) articles on the event:

- www.marlaktuell.de/?p=209731#more-209731
- www.halternerzeitung.de/lokales/haltern/sport/...
- www.halternerzeitung.de/lokales/haltern/Schach-Ausstellung...

PS (22/03/2013): Eva Masthoff has also reported about the exhibition in the "Mitteilungen" of the German ex-libris Society, available online as PDF: [Mitteilungen 2013 – 1](#), see p. 17f.

PS (19/05/2013): Irene Stock wrote an article on the exhibition ("Schachausstellung in der Stadtbücherei lockt 3000 Besucher") in *Lokallust Haltern am See*, issue 05.2013, p. 22f.

Ralf Binnewirtz