Visualizations of A Dream of Red Mansions as a Case for Image-text Relationships and the Illustrated Book in Early Modern China

Summary / Zusammenfassung
The dissertation project "Visualizations of A Dream of Red Mansions as a Case for Image-text Relationships and the Illustrated Book in Early Modern China" by Kristina Janotová studies the visualization and reception of a Chinese illustrated narrative, the novel «A Dream of Red Mansions» («Honglou meng»), written by Cao Xueqin (ca. 1715-1763). The project is viewing the narrative text and its pictorial representations as sharing a dialogic relationship. It analyzes, interprets and communicates the meaning of information presented in the novel in the form of visual signs and texts, implying awareness of the logic, emotions and attitudes suggested by visual images. It studies how the artists dealt with the subtler aspects of «Honglou meng», such as the connotations and implications of certain characters and scenes. Since «Honglou meng» was first published in 1791, the visual signs and texts carry meanings, intentions and relations from the past. In comparison to recent visual signs and texts, the research is based on a different mode of engagement and analysis, and a multidisciplinary interpretation. The various functions of the novel's visualizations are also investigated in relation to the history of the illustrated book in China, and last but not least, the project formulates a definition of the illustrated book in early modern China.

Keywords / Suchbegriffe
Early Modern China, A Dream of Red Mansions, Honglou meng, Cao Xueqin, Image-text Relationships, Illustrated Book, Visualization

Project Leadership and Contacts / Projektleitung und Kontakte
Prof. Dr. Roland Altenburger (Project Leader) roland.altenburger@uzh.ch
Kristina Janotová, MA (Project Leader) kristina.janotova@uzh.ch

Funding Source(s) / Unterstützt durch
UZH Stipendienpool für zentral- und osteuropäische Länder; Sciex-NMSCH Fellowship Project

In Collaboration with / In Zusammenarbeit mit
Raoul D. Findeisen, Comenius University, Bratislava Slovakia

Duration of Project / Projektdauer
May 2011 to Apr 2012