

Phd Abstract (Tentative)

Title: **Once Upon A Time in China: Storytelling as a Didactic Tool**

Storytelling, in a narrow sense, is associated with fictional narratives, but in a broader sense, it is an essential tool for human communication, integral to a wide range of texts, both fiction and non-fiction, images, and objects. Many quotidian communications are acts of storytelling, whether it is a breakfast table conversation about the day ahead, a resume for a job interview, a newspaper article, or the latest post in an Instagram stories feed. Thus, while storytelling permeates our daily lives on a personal and societal level, the ease with which (dis)information can now be produced, distributed, and consumed, necessitates a more thorough awareness of the workings and powers of narratives. This project focuses on storytelling as an act, methodology and didactic tool, with narratives from and about China as its primary object of study. It aims to provide practical applications for storytelling in an educational setting, not only as a method of literary analysis, but also as a means to facilitate learning about China (*China Wissen*).

While storytelling itself may be universal, modes of storytelling can also be culturally specific. Analyzing such narratives is a great way to illuminate the social, cultural, and political context of their origin. Through China's long and diverse history of storytelling traditions, which differ from those in the "West", students can not only increase their knowledge about Chinese history, but also gain a broader perspective on the globalized world that they inhabit.

Marjolijn Kaiser