

*miklu meira óhljóð en frá megi segja*¹:
**Narratorial Potential and Boundaries
in Old Norse Literature**

Workshop

October 20/21, 2022

Tübingen/Germany

In the context of the collaborative research centre (CRC) *Different Aesthetics*, located at the University of Tübingen, the project “Narrative (self-)reflection in the Icelandic Family Sagas”² is organising a **two-day workshop** on the topic of narrative composition in Old Norse literature.

Our project focuses on the narrative voice, its self-presentation and its impact on narratives, aspects that have not yet received sufficient scholarly attention. The underlying premise is that the narrative voice employs a set of short narratorial comments in order to guide, structure and evaluate the narrative, as well as to connect it to the extradiegetic level. Not only do these narratorial comments serve to arrange the saga narrative, but they also reflect on the narratorial process. Thus, they offer brief insights into the aesthetic self-perception of these literary texts. Quantitative and qualitative analyses of the *Íslendingasögur* – complemented by studies of the *fornaldarsögur* and *riddarasögur* – show that these genres share some of the most frequently used comments and thus share a similar narrative design. At the same time, the narrative voice chooses to tell each saga in an individual way.

During **the workshop** we hope to widen our perspective and explore what narratorial voices are responsible for the narrative composition of different saga genres and beyond. Where do these narrative authorities manifest themselves in the texts? How do they present themselves, and to what extent are they self-reflective regarding the narratorial process? In addition, we are interested in exploring whether a diachronic change can be identified in the narrative composition and the aesthetic self-presentation of a text in its various manuscripts. Similar questions arise about compilations: Are these extensive works united by a single narrative composition that reflects the narratorial taste of the scribe/compiler or does each text feature an individual design? Do texts which were translated into Old Norse keep the narrative composition of the original or adopt an Old Norse narrative design? In short, we aim to discuss which narratorial voices are primarily responsible for narrative composition, how they go about this and to what extent these narrative designs both share features and differ from each other.

¹ *Bárðar saga*. In: *Harðar saga*, Þórhallur Vilmundarson and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson gáfu út. Íslensk fornrit 13. Reykjavík: Hið íslenska fornritafélag, 1991, 154.

² [B5 \(Gropper\) | University of Tübingen \(uni-tuebingen.de\)](https://www.uni-tuebingen.de/B5/Gropper/)