



EBERHARD KARLS
UNIVERSITÄT
TÜBINGEN



CSC-Tübingen PhD Scholarship Program

2026/2027 application round: prospective PhD positions at the University of Tübingen

Faculty: Faculty of Humanities

Institute / Section / Subject: English Department / Department of Scandinavian Studies

Supervising Professor(s): Jun.Prof. Dr. Rebecca Merkelbach

About the Supervisor(s): <https://uni-tuebingen.de/en/fakultaeten/philosophische-fakultaet/fachbereiche/neuphilologie/englisches-seminar/subdivisions/scandinavian-studies/staff/merkelbach/>

Head of the Department of Scandinavian Studies since 2021; studied in Tübingen, Dublin, Reykjavík and Cambridge. Completed PhD at the University of Cambridge in 2017. Widely published on particularly late medieval Icelandic saga literature, monstrosity, emotion, gender, and storyworlds, including two monographs: *Monsters in Society: Alterity, Transgression, and the Use of the Past in Medieval Iceland* (De Gruyter, 2019) and *Story, World and Character in the Late Íslendingasögur: Rogue Sagas* (Boydell&Brewer 2024).

Specification/Project title: Travel and Adventure in the Post-Classical Sagas of Icelanders

Topic Description: The project focuses on the post-classical sagas of Icelanders, a group of medieval Icelandic prose works that has traditionally received less scholarly attention but has recently attracted increasing interest. Travel and adventure are prominent features of these texts, with characters moving across geographical, social, and sometimes human or supernatural boundaries. The project will examine the narrative functions and cultural meanings of travel and adventure through textual analysis and comparison with other medieval Icelandic and European narratives, placing these motifs within the socio-cultural contexts of late medieval Iceland.

Intended Degree: Dr.phil.

Type of the PhD Study: Full-time

Required Degrees and Qualifications: A master's degree in medieval European literary and cultural studies, ideally in Old Norse-Icelandic studies; expertise in working with the post-classical sagas of Icelanders as part of the candidate's master's thesis would be preferred

Language Requirements: English: IELTS 8 or above, or equivalent TOEFL

Old Norse: at least one semester of study; at least a B in the final exam

Notes: This project is intended to continue the diversification of Old Norse-Icelandic studies by supporting a young Chinese scholar in the field and to showcase that this is an international field whose objects attract interest from scholars globally. The theme of travel is particularly suited to this, as it not

only is an important aspect of the literary texts to be analysed, but also allows us to draw on our own experiences of travelling and living abroad – something that will be close to the successful candidate's heart. The candidate will also be able to connect with other scholars in the department, who are also currently working on the related subject of domestic travel in the sagas of Icelanders.