

Retelling stories from the archive: Assessing cognitive approaches to historiography

This project aims on a systematic assessment of cognitive models as historiographical tools

About the project

Within the past two decades, cognitive cultural studies have been established as a promising new field aiming to introduce explanatory frameworks to the study of cultural phenomena. The project aims on a systematic assessment of cognitive models as historiographical tools.

Both narratology and the study of religion have received a promising impulse from including cognitive modelling into their methodological spectrum. With their foundations in the analytical philosophy of mind, evolutionary biology and empirical psychology, cognitive approaches did not only provide empirical insights, but allowed for the development of new questions and introduced a new set of concepts to describe cultural phenomena with unprecedented precision.

Objectives

The project provides a systematic assessment of cognitive models as historiographical tools. Using heterogeneous documents from the Norsk Folkeminnesamling, different cognitive models are applied to historical case studies. As the project's objective is a methodological assessment, different frameworks will be compared regarding their heuristic quality for the application on pre-defined sets of historical data. The project aims on developing a sound framework for cognitively informed historiographical analyses and providing both the cognitive cultural studies as well as the cognitive sciences with a qualified feedback on the historical tenability of their models.