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This paper deals with the origins and evolution of the þættir as a category and the influence of the manuscript culture and the editions on þættir scholarship. As a published genre the þættir were founded in the 19th century, in the earliest þættir editions. These editions influenced scholarly opinion on the þættir considerably and they in turn were influenced by early 19th century manuscripts where þættir are collected. In the Middle Ages, the þættir are on the other hand always included in kings' sagas and the question is: When do they begin to appear as separate narratives and a separate category? And what is the influence of scribes on the 20th century scholarly reception?