The Questionable Authorship of Snorri Sturluson: Can stylometry tell us something new?

University of Victoria

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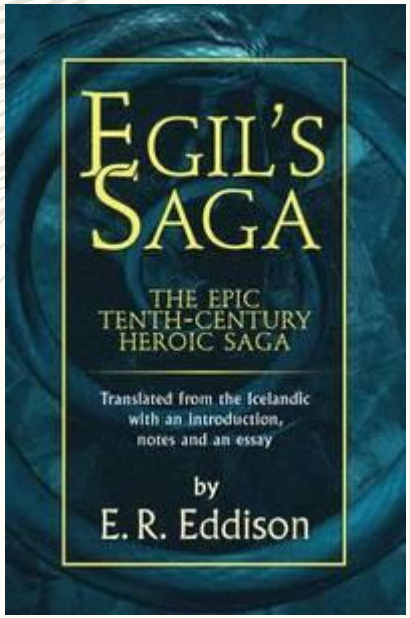
Jón Karl Helgason

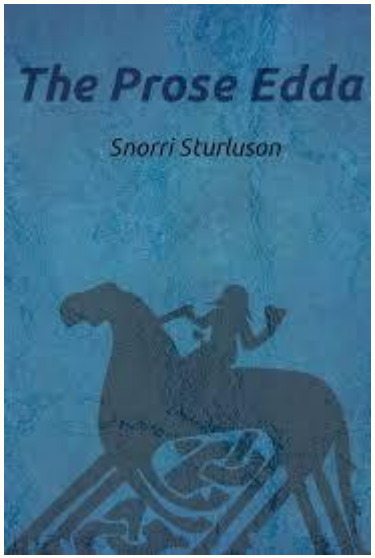
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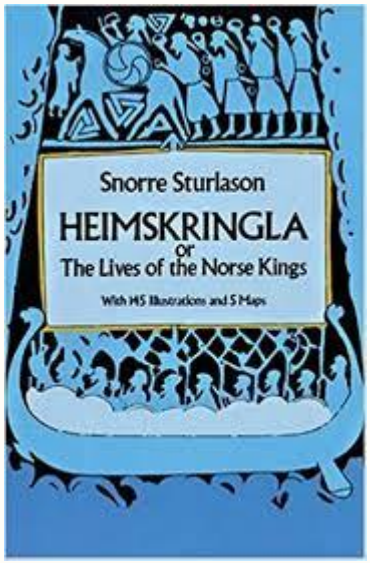
Snorro Sturleson on Sorbonne in Paris



Snorri's major works







From the ms. Uppsalabók

This book is called Edda. Snorri Sturluson has **compiled** it in the manner in which it is arranged here. There is first **told about the Æsir and Ymir**, then **Skáldskaparmál** ... and (poetical) names of many things, finally **Háttatal** ... which Snorri has composed about King Hákon and Earl Skúli.

From The Greatest Saga of Ólaf Tryggvason

"**Snorri said so** that King Svein set his ship against the Long Serpent, but Olaf the Swede set his ship's stern against Olaf Tryggvason's outermost ship."

Snorri Sturluson was as a complier (according to Sturla Thordarson)

Sturla (Snorri's brother) spent some considerable time at Reykjaholt and gave much thought to having copies made of the saga books which Snorri was **compiling** (setja saman).

Distributed authorship



A passage from *Heimskringla*

Hall, the son of Thorgeir Steinsson, the physician, was one of King Ingi's bodyguards and was present at these happenings. He related them to Eirík Oddsson **who wrote down this account**. Eirík wrote the book which is called Hryggjarstykki. In that book we are told about Harald Gilli and his two sons; also of Magnús the Blind and of Sigurth Gadabout-Deacon, down to their death. Eirík was a man of good understanding and had at that time been long in Norway. Some of his account he wrote according to what he was told by Hákon Maw, a landed-man under the two sons of Harald. Hákon and his sons took part in all these fights and counsels. Eirík mentions still other men who told him about these events, men who were both of good understanding and reliable. They were close by, so that they heard or saw what was happening. But some things he wrote according to what he himself heard or saw.

Can we know what Snorri's really "created"?

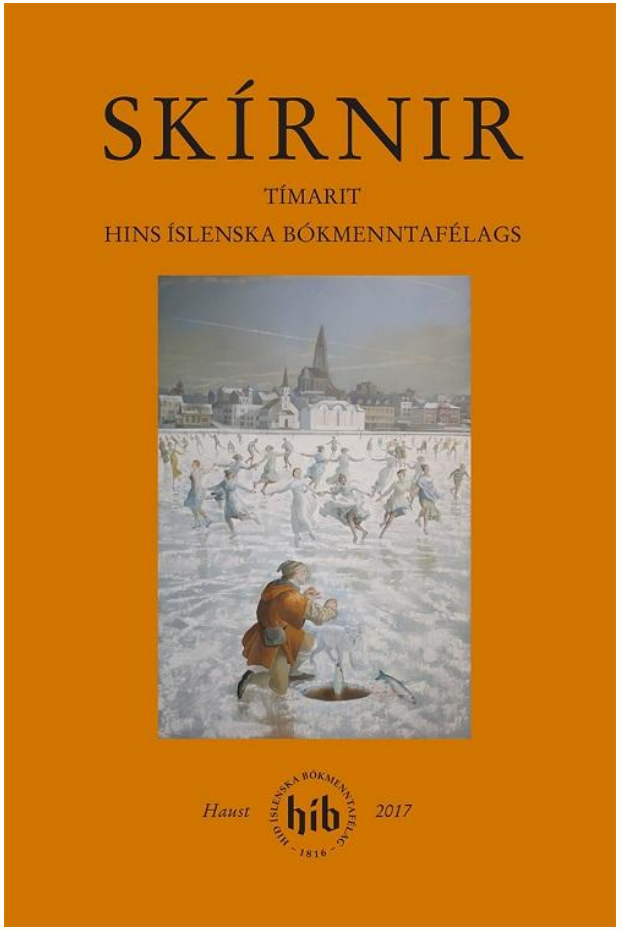


Snorri‘s Collective Works

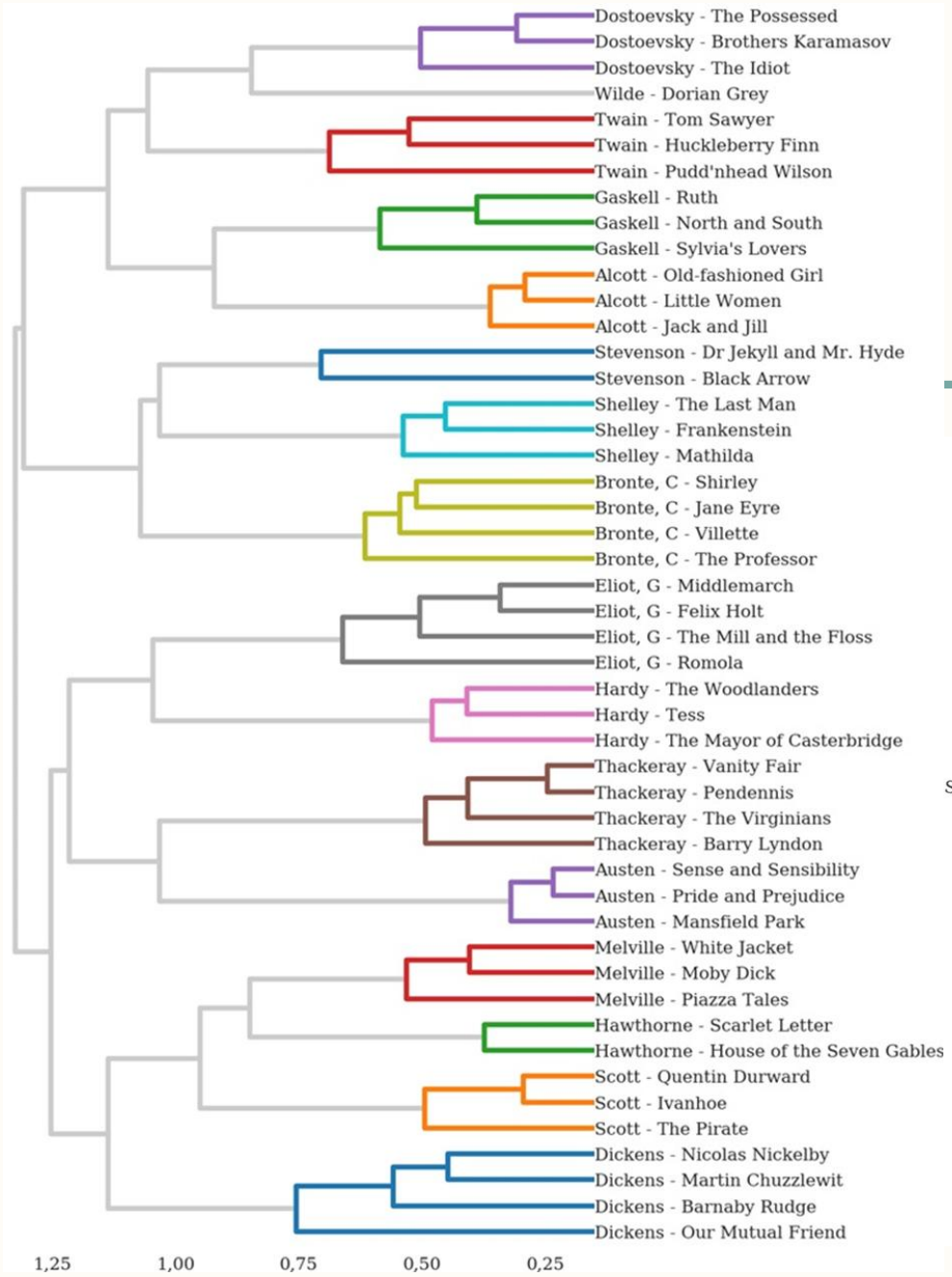


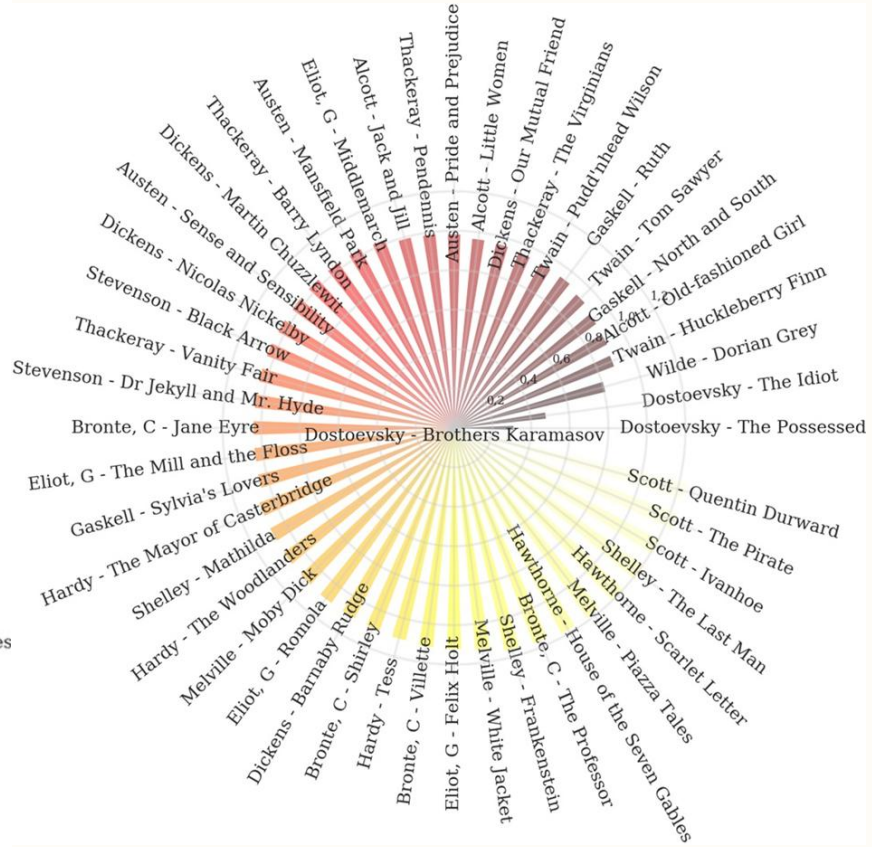
Articles by Kárason, Björnsson and Helgason (2017) and Þorgeirsson (2014, 2018)





What is stylometry?





Stylometry and Sagas: Findings of our Research Group





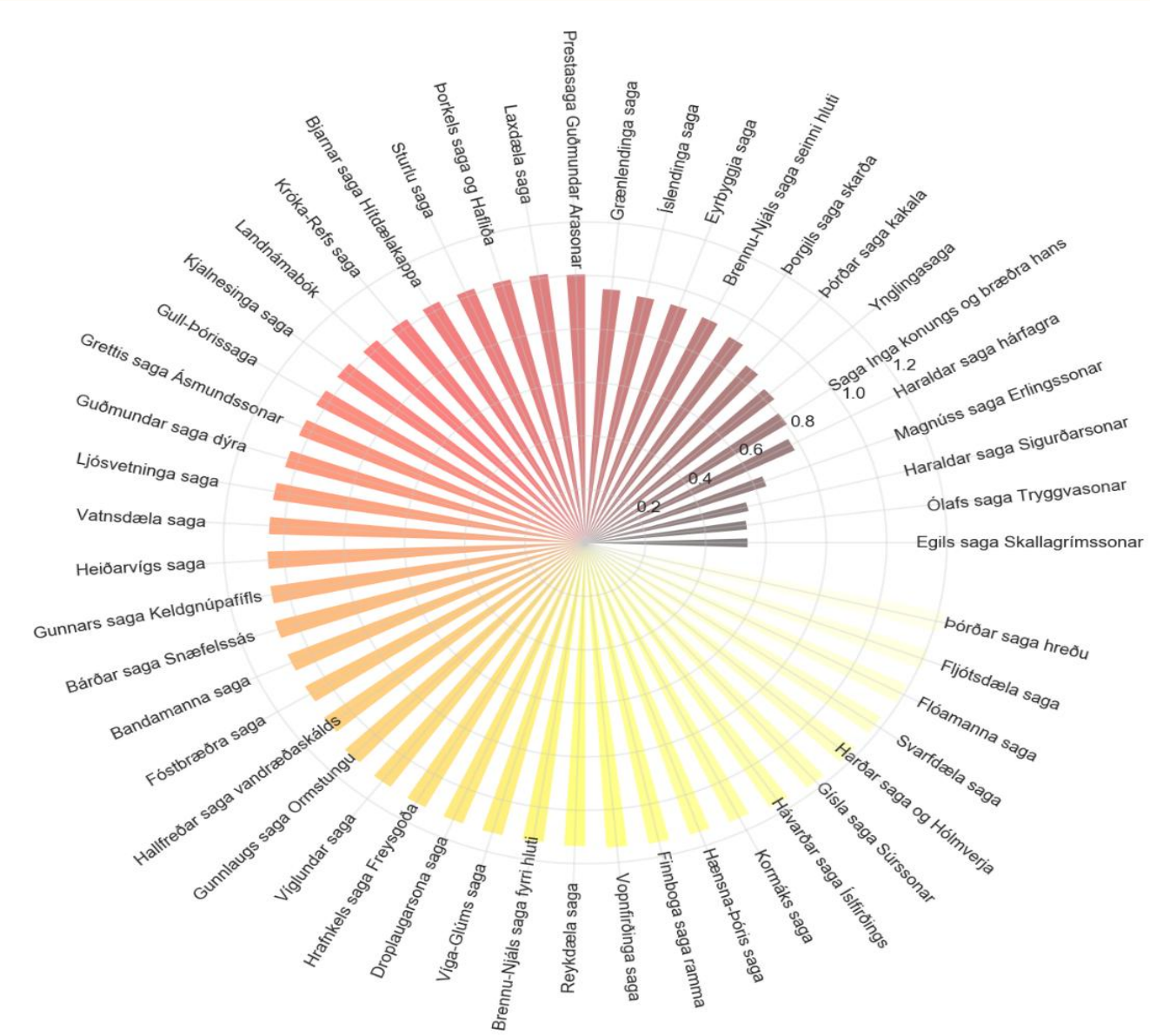

Steingrímur Kárason, Sigurður Ingibergur Björnsson, Haukur Þorgeirsson, Jón K. Helgason

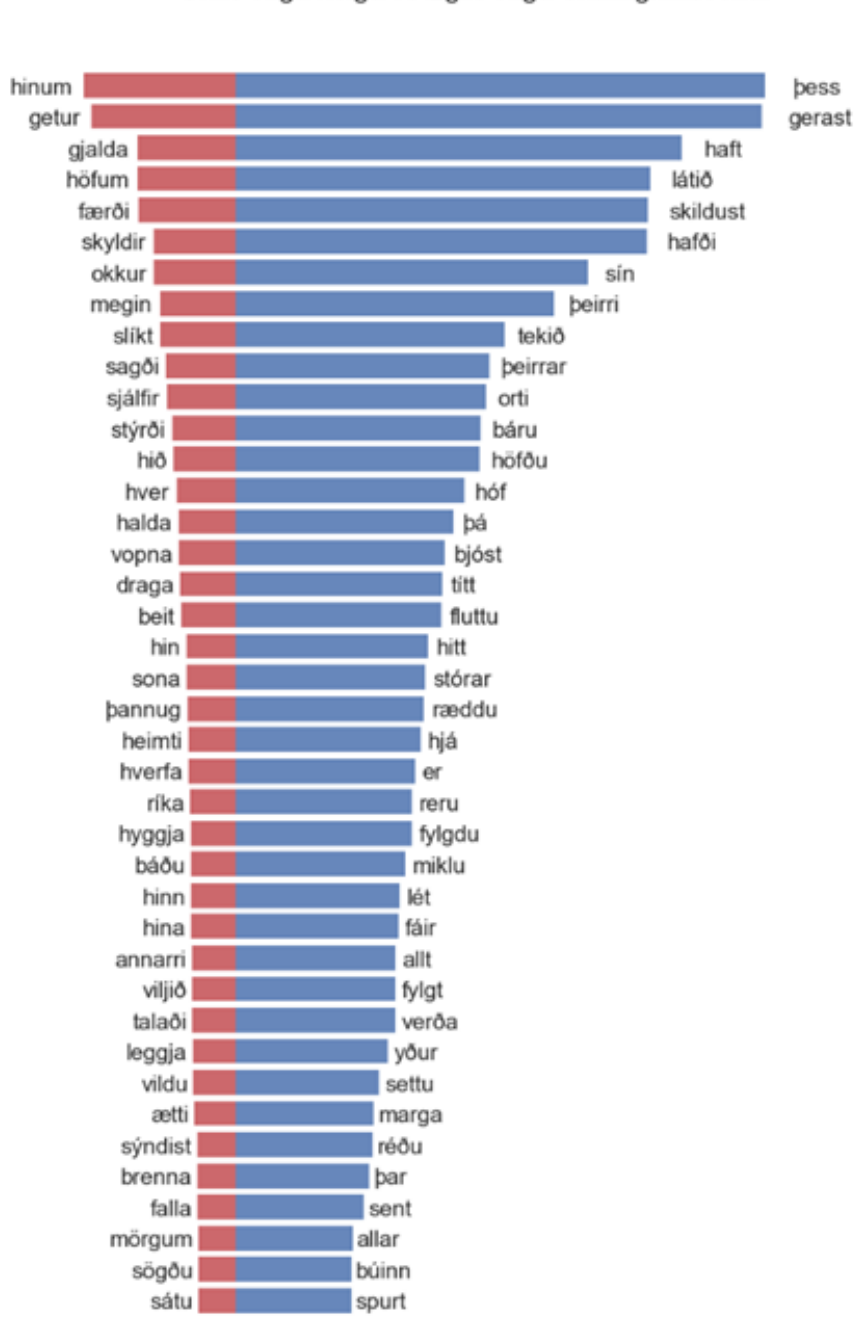
a) Njáls saga hardly written by Sturla Þórðarson

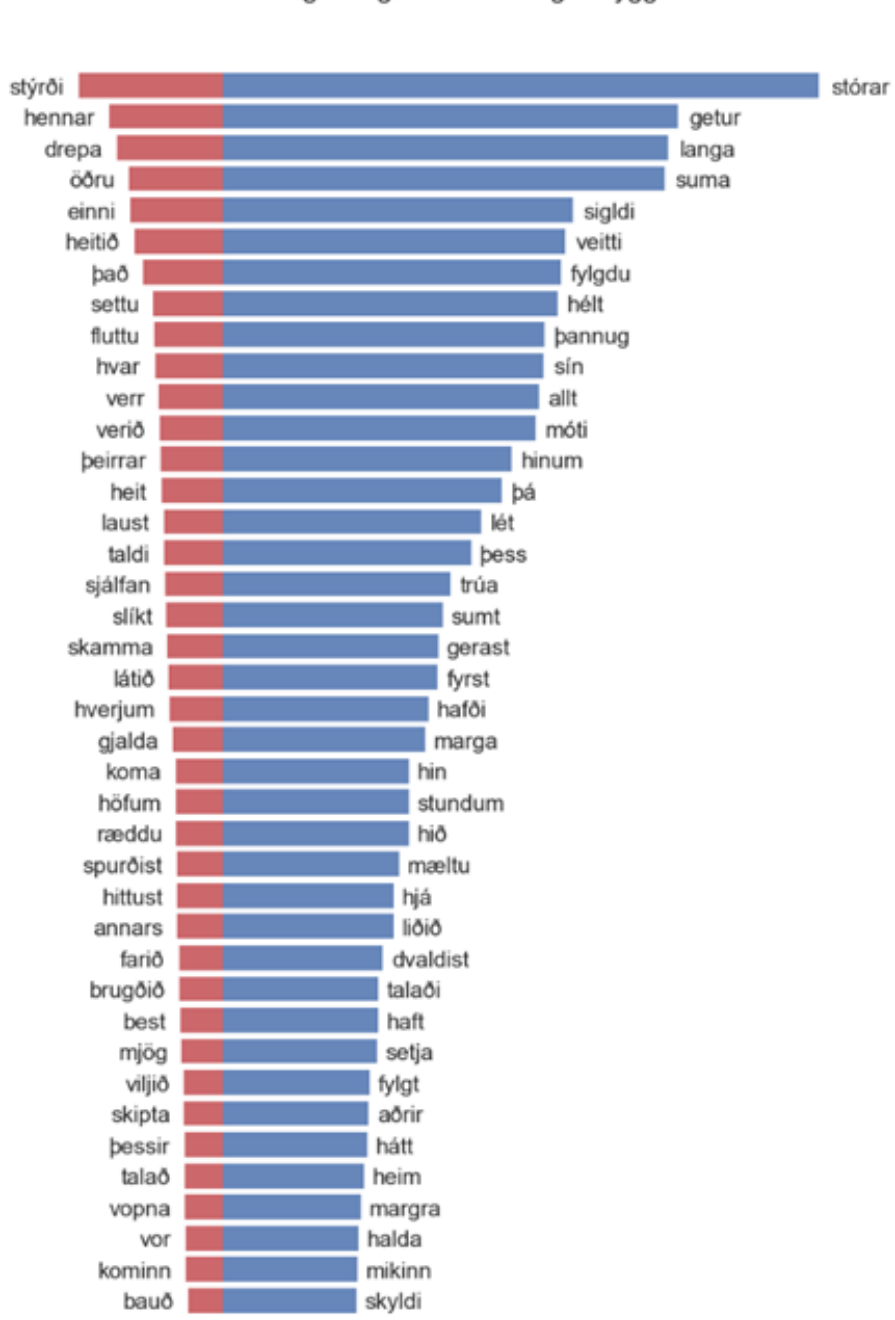
b) Sturla probably wrote The Saga of Thorgils skardi and The Saga of Thord kakali

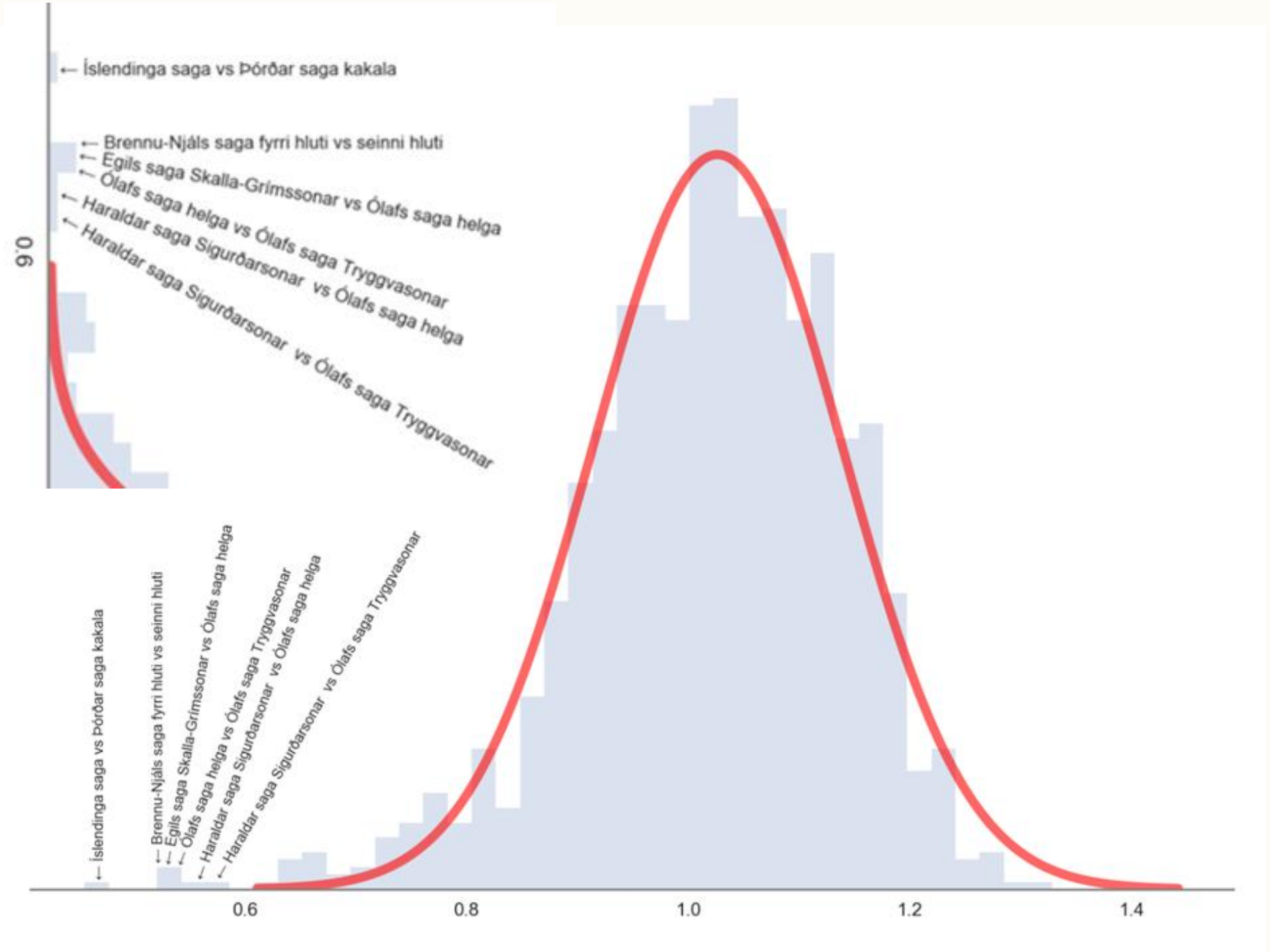
c) Probably Egils saga was written by the same author as The Saga of St. Olaf and The Saga of Olaf Tryggvason

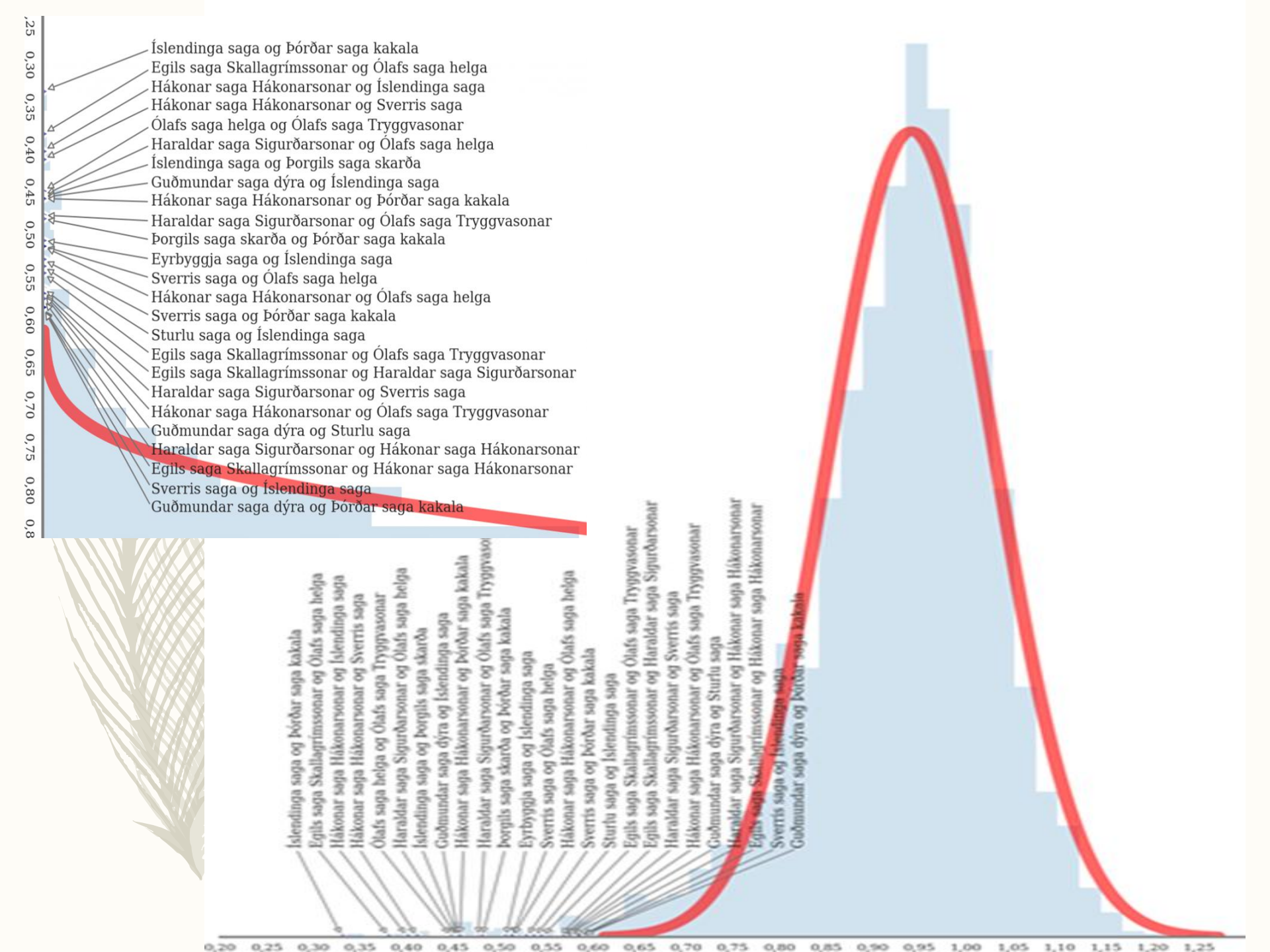
The Saga of St. Olaf




Ólafs saga helga vs Egils saga Skallagrímssonar
hinum þess
getur gerast
gjalda haft
höfum látið
færði skildust
skyldir hafði
okkur sín
megin þeirri
slíkt tekið
sagði þeirrar
sjálfir orti
stýrði báru
hið höfðu
hver hóf
halda þá
vopna bjóst
draga títt
beit fluttu
hin hitt
sona stórar
þannug ræddu
heimti hjá
hverfa er
ríka reru
hyggja fylgdu
báðu miklu
hinn lét
hina fáir
annarri allt
viljið fylgt
talaði verða
leggja yður
vildu settu
ætti marga
sýndist réðu
brenna þar
falla sent
mörgum allar
sögðu búinn
sátu spurt


Ólafs saga helga vs Ólafs saga Tryggvasonar
stýrði stórar
hennar getur
drepa langa
öðru suma
einni sigldi
heitið veitti
það fylgdu
settu hélt
fluttu þannug
hvar sín
verr allt
verið móti
þeirrar hinum
heit þá
laust lét
taldi þess
sjálfan trúa
slíkt sumt
skamma gerast
látið fyrst
hverjum hafði
gjalda marga
koma hin
höfum stundum
ræddu hið
spurðist mæltu
hittust hjá
annars liðið
farið dvaldist
brugðið talaði
best haft
mjög setja
viljið fylgt
skipta aðrir
þessir hátt
talað heim
vopna margra
vor halda
kominn mikinn
bauð skyldi


← Íslendinga saga vs Þórðar saga kakala
← Brennu-Njáls saga fyrri hluti vs seinni hluti
← Egils saga Skalla-Grímssonar vs Ólafs saga helga
← Ólafs saga helga vs Ólafs saga Tryggvasonar
← Haraldar saga Sigurðarsonar vs Ólafs saga helga
← Haraldar saga Sigurðarsonar vs Ólafs saga Tryggvasonar
0.0
Íslendinga saga vs Þórðar saga kakala
Brennu-Njáls saga fyrri hluti vs seinni hluti
Egils saga Skalla-Grímssonar vs Ólafs saga helga
Ólafs saga helga vs Ólafs saga Tryggvasonar
Haraldar saga Sigurðarsonar vs Ólafs saga helga
Haraldar saga Sigurðarsonar vs Ólafs saga Tryggvasonar
0.6
0.8
1.0
1.2
1.4


Íslendinga saga og Þórðar saga kakala
Egils saga Skallagrímssonar og Ólafs saga helga
Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar og Íslendinga saga
Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar og Sverris saga
Ólafs saga helga og Ólafs saga Tryggvasonar
Haraldar saga Sigurðarsonar og Ólafs saga helga
Íslendinga saga og Þorgils saga skarða
Guðmundar saga dýra og Íslendinga saga
Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar og Þórðar saga kakala
Haraldar saga Sigurðarsonar og Ólafs saga Tryggvasonar
Þorgils saga skarða og Þórðar saga kakala
Eyrbyggja saga og Íslendinga saga
Sverris saga og Ólafs saga helga
Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar og Ólafs saga helga
Sverris saga og Þórðar saga kakala
Sturlu saga og Íslendinga saga
Egils saga Skallagrímssonar og Ólafs saga Tryggvasonar
Egils saga Skallagrímssonar og Haraldar saga Sigurðarsonar
Haraldar saga Sigurðarsonar og Sverris saga
Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar og Ólafs saga Tryggvasonar
Guðmundar saga dýra og Sturlu saga
Haraldar saga Sigurðarsonar og Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar
Egils saga Skallagrímssonar og Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar
Sverris saga og Íslendinga saga
Guðmundar saga dýra og Þórðar saga kakala
0,25 0,30 0,35 0,40 0,45 0,50 0,55 0,60 0,65 0,70 0,75 0,80 0,8
0,20 0,25 0,30 0,35 0,40 0,45 0,50 0,55 0,60 0,65 0,70 0,75 0,80 0,85 0,90 0,95 1,00 1,05 1,10 1,15 1,20 1,25