

Approaches to Dating the Poetry in the Sagas of Icelanders

REVIEW ESSAY BY MIKAEL MALES

Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages, V: Poetry in the Sagas of Icelanders. Edited by Margaret Clunies Ross, †Kari Ellen Gade and Tarrin Wills, 2 vols (Turnhout: Brepols, 2022): pp. cxxxvi + 1613.

Even more than previous volumes, *SkP* 5 is a milestone within skaldic studies. The poetry in the sagas of Icelanders has generated lively debate for more than a century, not least due to the thorny dating issues relating to this corpus. In its ‘Introduction’, *SkP* 5 presents a richer and more precise set of dating criteria than any previous, widely accessible overview, and in the editions of the poetry, discussions of dating are much more prominent than in previous volumes. *SkP* 5 therefore heralds an interesting new approach. In addition, tensions between the methodology of the ‘Introduction’ and individual contributions make for an illuminating analysis of available options. Since relevant criteria vary between sagas and are used differently by individual editors, the methodology of *SkP* 5 is here explored through case studies. Egill’s poetry is explored in detail, since despite being the largest corpus in the edition, formal dating criteria are largely bypassed.

SkP 5 and Probability

The ‘Introduction’ to *SkP* 5 differs from previous volumes in taking a more probabilistic approach to two topics. First, it contains a list of so-called half-kennings, collected by Margaret Clunies Ross (*SkP* 5: cxxxiv–cxxxvi).

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Half-kennings are ‘incomplete’ kennings in the sense that they contain only part of some frequent kenning type, such as *runnar* ‘bushes [MEN]’ for an ordinary ‘bushes of swords [MEN]’ or the like. As a consultation of individual instances will show, Finnur Jónsson, editor of the old standard edition, considered half-kennings to be due to error and therefore typically emended them to achieve complete kennings. Scholars today, including the editors of *SkP*, are less prone to emendation. Such a conservative approach reduces the likelihood that editors introduce errors, but it does not in itself imply that manuscript forms are more likely to be original than emendations. In this instance, however, another factor does. Half-kennings belong to frequent kenning types, mainly denoting ‘man’ or ‘woman’, meaning that definers (‘of swords’ etc.) are not strictly necessary for decoding the kenning. It seems unlikely that scribes would be more prone to error in such common and simple kennings than in rare and complex ones. Furthermore, the reason for dropping the definer is evident, since the kenning is comprehensible without it. Clunies Ross thus clearly has probability on her side, and her collection of examples is useful not only as a heuristic, but also as a corrective to overly rigid interpretations of the kenning system. The list contains some omissions, however.¹

Secondly, the ‘Introduction’ features a section on ‘Dating and Authenticity’ (below *DA*), focusing on metrical and linguistic dating criteria (*SkP* 5: xcvi–cvii). Nothing of the kind is found in previous volumes, which adopt an agnostic stance. It should be noted, however, that *SkP* represents a brand of agnosticism that leans towards faith in early dates, in contrast to the manuscript-prone agnosticism common in eddic scholarship and much recent medievalist scholarship generally (see discussion and examples in Males 2022b and 2023). Unlike both types of agnosticism, *DA* is bent on evaluation of probabilities, and a similar approach is taken in several individual contributions to the volume. *DA* is written in the spirit of the late Kari Ellen Gade, who sadly passed before the publication of these volumes, and the section was instead written by Klaus Johan Myrvoll. In spite of the emphasis on dating in *DA* and many individual contributions, Margaret Clunies Ross in her introduction to Egill’s poetry stresses that *SkP* 5 retains the ‘largely agnostic position’ on dating of previous volumes (*SkP* 5: 159). Even in her own editions, however, this is debatable, since she devotes much discussion to the topic and presents firm conclusions (e.g. *SkP* 5: 188–89, 233–36, 294, 331–32, 917, 947). The turn towards dating is thus fairly

¹ E.g. *Lofn bandar* (*SkP* 5: 60), *þing* (*SkP* 5: 195–96), *ægir* (*SkP* 5: 272).

consistent throughout *SkP* 5, but the choice of dating methods is not. For this reason, *SkP* 5 is a treasure-trove for methodological evaluation.

To this reader's mind, there need be no strong contradiction between a cautious approach and an evaluation of dating criteria. In contrast to Clunies Ross's formulation, however, I would suggest that caution is a more useful quality than agnosticism in a scholarly context, since after all, a key aim of scholarship is to expand our knowledge. A presentation of available dating evidence is a useful feature of most editions of medieval texts, but their validity and implications ought to be treated with caution, since an edition should primarily be a tool for others to test their hypotheses, rather than a medium for its editors to do so.² Since *SkP* will be the new standard edition for the foreseeable future, a combination of evaluation and caution is desirable.

The turn towards evaluation of dating criteria in *SkP* 5 could not easily have been avoided, since the topic has been central in scholarship on this body of poetry. Individual contributors have responded differently to this challenge, however, and in the following, I focus on a selection of illuminating cases.

The 'Dating and Authenticity' Section

DA summarises the most useful metrical and linguistic dating criteria identified to date, some of which have only been thoroughly tested in recent years. The overview is concise and has several advantages over Gade 2000, which has served as a point of reference for the last two decades. Myrvoll does not clearly communicate, however, that he has conducted the most thorough investigation to date of the criteria mentioned and that their reliability is now clearer than when Gade wrote her study. This is a crucial point for appreciating how much the field has advanced, and I will therefore highlight relevant aspects here. Although Myrvoll has subsequently conducted a more focused investigation of the poetry in *Gísla saga* (Myrvoll 2020), the real game changer remains his doctoral thesis of 2014, systematically evaluating 12 dating criteria. The thesis is unpublished, and although its variety of *nynorsk* is a source of delight to some, it may limit access to others, and I therefore note some of its main findings here. I exclude criteria where Myrvoll's investigation adds little new, but these are few (mainly rhyme in *a : ρ* and indications of late dates).

² Of course, editorial work involves an ongoing testing of hypotheses, but the goal of editions lies in providing a useful text, and testing is thus a by-product rather than an aim in itself.

In her 2000 article, Gade dated contraction of hiatus (*áar* > *ár*, *sæing* > *sæng*, etc.) to c. 1200, and due to early fluctuation between hiatus and contracted forms in a limited number of words and inflectional endings, she deemed the criterion unreliable (Gade 2000: 52–53; cf. Kuhn 1983: 69–70). The presence of early contracted forms does not imply a corresponding existence of late hiatus forms, however. From a linguistic perspective, it may be surprising that hiatus and contracted forms existed side by side for two hundred years, but this seems in fact to have been the case, and in some lexical items, the hiatus variant may have passed out of use earlier than in others (notably *friendr*; see below). Snorri's partly failed attempt to imitate hiatus instils faith in the criterion, and so does that fact that the First Grammarian c. 1150 felt the need to explain the phenomenon.³

Gade is thus more sceptical than necessary, and this may to some degree be related to the fact that she, like Kuhn, dates the final contraction of hiatus forms as late as c. 1200, somewhat limiting the value of the criterion. The First Grammarian's description suggests that hiatus forms were disappearing in his day, however, and with Myrvoll's comprehensive dataset, it is possible to see that we find only contracted forms after c. 1150 (Myrvoll 2014: 309–36). This is a more useful date than c. 1200, since it places us well before the writing of sagas of Icelanders, and hiatus forms therefore cannot plausibly be attributed to saga authors composing spurious poetry. Myrvoll's close scrutiny has thus provided scholars with a useful criterion which they were earlier prone to ignore. Not all of the editors in *SkP* 5 take hiatus into account, but Myrvoll provides a useful list of occurrences, which may be used in tandem with the editions.

Myrvoll's treatment of expletive *offum* is mainly conventional, but he adds important and updated observations on the use of the particle before adjectives and nouns (*SkP* 5: xcix; though see below on important omissions in Egill's poetry). The discussion of heavy dips mainly follows Hans Kuhn, but presenting the criterion in this context is valuable, since it is often overlooked in skaldic scholarship (*SkP* 5: ci). Something similar may be said of breaks to Craigie's law, too often bypassed by scholars (*SkP* 5: cii–ciii). The discussion of late placement of the alliterating stave is updated and impor-

³ The form in the First Grammatical Treatise is *éarn* or *íarn* for later *járn*, and it is clear from the author's description that knowledge of this form was dying out at the time of writing (Hreinn Benediktsson ed. 1971: 224–26). Snorri correctly produces the forms *þjóðár*, *dreyrfá* and *járngrá* in cases where the metre demands the older forms in *-áar*, *-fáa* and *-gráa*, but reveals himself in the choice of the form *vindblés*, in which there was no further syllable in the earlier stage of the language (Faulkes ed. 2007: 7).

tant, not least since the occasional use of this feature in archaisation has only recently been evaluated (*SkP* 5: ciii–civ). The relative chronology of lack of *aðalhendingar* in even verses and *skothendingar* in odd ones is based on Myrvoll's own comprehensive study and is an important improvement on earlier, less precise descriptions. Lack of *aðalhendingar* is restricted to very earliest poets, whereas occasional lack of *skothendingar* is found down to c. 1000. This development only becomes evident through exclusion of likely spurious stanzas by Egill and Kormákr, in whose poetry the lack of *aðalhendingar* correlates with implausible linguistic forms as well as other indications of composition for the saga. These patterns have only recently been described in studies by Myrvoll and the present author. I return to this topic below.

Kuhn 1981 did important groundwork on 'compensatory rhyme', and through Myrvoll's study, Kuhn's observations have been corroborated. Compensatory rhyme may now be considered a strong dating criterion (Myrvoll 2014: 109–32). This is important, since in spite of Kuhn's study, scholars have generally not drawn on this criterion.

As seen from this overview, the number of available dating criteria has increased in recent years, and some older criteria now appear more reliable. The case for agnosticism is thus weaker than it used to be, and by consulting *DA* in tandem with the editions in *SkP* 5, the scholar is provided with a powerful tool for evaluation.

Egils saga: Restriction to Contextual Evidence

For a number of reasons, I here analyse Margaret Clunies Ross' edition of the poetry in *Egils saga* in more detail than other contributions. First, this is by far the most substantial corpus in *SkP* 5, running to 239 pages, and Egill's poetry is universally admired and much discussed. Second, while providing relatively extensive discussions of dating based on contextual evidence and a few formal criteria presented by Jón Helgason, Clunies Ross otherwise disregards the considerable range of formal evidence almost completely.⁴ Third, new criteria for the dating of Egill's poetry have been presented in recent years, and since these are near-absent from the edition and only partially referred in *DA*, an overview may serve to enhance the benefits of the edition.

⁴ In her editions of *Harðar saga* and *Hávarðar saga*, by contrast, she does take formal criteria into account (*SkP* 5: 917, 947). In consulting these editions, it may be useful to know that she in both instances uses 'desyllabification' to denote 'syllabification'.

As a rule, Clunies Ross does not comment on hiatus forms, either with regard to their metrical plausibility or their implications for dating.⁵ There are a number of such forms in Egill's poetry, and these may serve to inform the analysis, both in general favour of authenticity and in order to question common scholarly assumptions, such as that Egill's *lausavísa* 5 was composed for the saga. This is unlikely, since it contains the hiatus form *þría* (cf. *SkP* 5: 170–71).

Overall, the reader may identify metrically secured hiatus forms by consulting the list in *DA* (*SkP* 5: xcix), but two occurrences not listed there call for closer analysis. As noted by Finnur Jónsson, Þorgeir Sigurðsson and Haukur Þorgeirsson, *kviðuháttir* poems and some *fornyrðislag* poems, notably *Hymiskviða* and *Höfuðlausn*, avoid a realisation of type C verses (x / x) where both stresses are carried by long stems (or forms ending in another *-r* than s. n. m., the least 'integral' of Old Norse *-rs*) (Finnur Jónsson 1886–1888: 435; Þorgeir Sigurðsson 2019: 142–44; Haukur Þorgeirsson 2023: 706). Some poets apparently felt that such verses – called type C1 in metrical scholarship – were either too heavy or too symmetrical. In a total of 41 type C verses, *Höfuðlausn* displays no exceptions, except for two verses where the principle holds if hiatus is restored.⁶ According to the manuscripts, *Höfuðlausn* 7.8 reads *við blár randir*, but restoration of hiatus gives *við bláar randir* with resolution on *bláar*. *Höfuðlausn* 8.8. reads *í járnleiki*, which gives *í éarnleiki* with restoration of hiatus. The principle appears to be a stronger expression of a tendency to avoid C1 verses in *fornyrðislag* generally. Thus, for instance, in the fairly regular *Völuspá* (excluding the irregular dwarf lists), Haukur Þorgeirsson counts nine such verses out of a total of 118 type C verses, or 7.6% (*Haukur Þorgeirsson* 2016: 131–34; verse 8.5, 9.8, 10.1, 10.5, 17.1, 21.3, 32.2, 38.4, 44.3). The fact that the only two C1 verses in *Höfuðlausn* allow for restoration of hiatus is highly unlikely to be due to coincidence, and *bláar* and *éarn* in *Höfuðlausn* may thus be added to *DA*'s lists.⁷ The question of hiatus forms in *Sonatorrek* and *Arinbjarnarkviða* is somewhat more open.

Even verses of these *kviðuháttir* poems seem to be more in line with the

⁵ Exceptions are found in *Arinbjarnarkviða* 5–6, where she comments on the metrical necessity of reading *bráa* and *hæings*, but not on their implications for dating (*SkP* 5: 338–39).

⁶ The following verses are type C: 5.3, 5.6, 5.8, 7.2, 7.4, 7.6, 7.8, 8.2, 8.4, 8.6, 8.8, 10.5, 10.7, 11.1–3, 11.5–6, 11.8, 13.1–4, 13.6, 13.8, 14.1–2, 16.2, 16.5, 16.7, 17.3, 18.1–6, 19.6, 19.8, 21.2, 21.4.

⁷ Þorgeir Sigurðsson claims that a similar situation applies in *Háleygjatal*, the only exception to the principle being verse 3.4 *við járnviðju*, which with restored hiatus gives *við éarnviðju* (Þorgeir Sigurðsson 2019: 144). He seems to have overlooked 5.4 *þars víkr deilir*, however, and in *SkP* 1: 210, stanza 11.8 reads *at eyðndum*.

tendency seen in *Vǫluspá*, avoiding but not forbidding C1. Of 23–25 type C verses, *Sonatorrek* contains two C1: *við óðræði* (14.4) and *at vélondum* (24.8). Interestingly, however, we also find the C1 verse *at frændgarði* (6.4), which would read *at fríendgarði* with hiatus, avoiding C1. Since C1 verses are not completely absent, the contracted form cannot be conclusively ruled out, but the hiatus form is decidedly more plausible. With or without *fríendgarði*, *Sonatorrek* at least contains the hiatus form *séak*, which is necessary to avoid a three-position even verse (23.4).

Similarly, *Arinbjarnarkviða* contains two C1 verses (1.4 and 4.1) of a total of 19–20 type C verses, and restoration of hiatus would eliminate a third: *at fjárafli* > *at féarafli* (17.8). While the hiatus forms in *Hǫfuðlausn* should certainly be added to *DA*'s lists, *fríendgarði* and *féarafli* are less secure, but with their roughly 90% probability, they are clearly relevant to an overall evaluation of the date of the poems. The form *fríendr* is particularly interesting, since it is otherwise only metrically secured in Þjóðólfr, *Ynglingatal* 19.1 *Dags fríendr* (*SkP* 1: 25) and Holmgöngu-Bersi, lv. 6.8 *Saurbæ fríendr auri* (*SkP* 5: 1096–97), even though the word is a common one in skaldic and eddic poetry. This suggests that the form *fríendr* may have been contracted early on.

The dating of Egill's long poems has seen much debate, and due to the relative scarcity of dating criteria in them, the preceding observations on hiatus are of some importance. The same may more emphatically be said of seven occurrences of expletive *of/um* before nouns, bypassed by both *DA* and Clunies Ross. As *DA* notes, this is a strong dating criterion to the period before c. 1000 (*SkP* 5: xcix). *Arinbjarnarkviða* 2.8 has *grepps of æði* and 22.3 has *sás of dolgr*, whereas *Sonatorrek* 24.2 has *ulfs of bági*. All three are metrically secured, and although the last is the result of emendation, the manuscripts have either *ok* or *um*. *Um* is a variant of *of*, and *ok* suggests that the archetype had *of*. Since this defunct type of expletive *of* was especially challenging to scribes, *of* would then have been trivialised to the syntactically untenable *ok*.⁸ *Hǫfuðlausn* has no less than four occurrences, 1.4 *svás mitt of far*, 2.2 *þar ák bróðrs of kvøð*, 4.8 *sús mest of lǫð*, 14.8 *Eiríks of far*, all metrically secured.

Expletive *of* before a noun is the strongest individual dating criterion in both *Arinbjarnarkviða* and *Sonatorrek* and should therefore be central to any evaluation of their dates. It is interesting to note that the occurrence

⁸ Similarly e.g. *Haustlǫng* 1.6, where all three witnesses have *ok* for *of* (*SkP* 1: 432).

⁹ This occurrence is omitted by Kuhn 1929: 33. Kuhn presumably follows Finnur Jónsson in taking *lá* as preterite of *liggja* (cf. *SkP* 5: 245).

in *Sonatorrek* has been preserved in the 1 ½ stanzas that have seen a good transmission, being included in *Skáldskaparmál* (23.5–24.8). By contrast, occurrences in the other two poems are more spread out. It is therefore worth considering the possibility that archaic features in the remainder of *Sonatorrek* have been obliterated in transmission, since archaic forms are prone to corruption. Of course, this cannot be taken as positive evidence, but it is a reminder that limited evidence is to be expected in *Sonatorrek*, given its state of preservation.

Among other formal criteria, the relative lack of discussion of *bendingar* is noteworthy, not least in light of new observations on *bending* structures in *Egils saga* presented in studies from 2011 onwards. The present author has shown that the most irregular *bending* style in *Egils saga* is associated with very simple syntax, few and simple kennings and some other features, making this style very distinct (Males 2011; Males 2020: 219–32). Klaus Johan Myrvoll has corroborated these findings through testing against further parameters (Myrvoll 2014: 118–25). In addition, the ‘simple’ style correlates with a number of mutually independent indications of late composition. Some of these are of a linguistic nature, such as the archaic form *Bárðr* in a typical Egill stanza versus the later *Bárðr* in the following stanza in the simple style (*Eg* 8 and 9). The simple style is also associated with unique attestation in *Eg* 12.5–8 versus additional attestation in *Skáldskaparmál* in the complex first half of the stanza, and with anonymity in stanzas composed by two ‘daughters’. Furthermore, Egill’s poetry otherwise features standard or unusually elaborate *bending* structures, whereas the simple style is much less elaborate than normal, thus occupying the opposite end of the scale of complexity (Males 2020: 232).

It is also noteworthy that the simple style is not the style of an individual poet, but of three, since it is shared with the two daughters (as well as the seven-year-old Egill). Finally, this style correlates with factual implausibility, such as the mention of the baleen of a whale lying under a bed in a house in the deep forests of central Sweden, as it might have done in Iceland, and the treatment of Lund as a place of importance long before it became so (*pace SkP* 5: 187). The features distinguishing the simple style from that of Egill are thus many and internally consistent and the evidence for its late date overwhelming. By not engaging with relevant scholarship, *SkP* 5 fails to inform the reader that the corpus of the most important poet in the edition contains two chronological strata, identifiable with greater precision and a wider range of evidence than in any other saga of Icelanders (a rare reference to some of the scholarship in question, regarding one aspect of one stanza,

is found on p. 290). For this reason, I here supply a list of stanzas that may with great probability be considered spurious. These are: *Eg* 7 (*SkP* 5: 175), 9 (179), 12.5–8 (185; first half likely authentic), 13–14 (188–89), 66 (284), 70 (289; first half, while not by Egill, is attested elsewhere as a poetic proverb about runes), 71 (291), 122.1–4 (367; second half may be authentic). Stanzas 70–71 and 122 are Egill's *lausavísur* 40–42 and thus form a group in the saga. Groupings and connections to the prose suggest that these stanzas were composed for the saga. The saga contains two clusters of the simple style, the first being 7, 9, 12.5–14, the second 66, 70–71, 122.

Of course, there may be other spurious poetry in the saga, composed in standard *dróttkvætt*, but outside the stanzas in the above list, indications of early dates dominate, and scholarly arguments for late dates have either been based on a single parameter or on criteria that are too vague to merit treatment as diagnostic. Thus, for instance, scholars have rightly doubted that the three-year-old Egill could compose in perfect *dróttkvætt*, but if formal criteria are taken into account, the hiatus form *þría* in one of the two stanzas in question indicates a date before *c.* 1150 (stanza 5.2). Sigurður Nordal's suggestion that the stanza was composed by an older, boastful Egill may thus have more merit than generally held. As Sigurður notes, many stanzas in *Egils saga* (as well as other sagas, one may add) are not likely to have been composed under the circumstances described in the saga, even when showing signs of 'authenticity'. Skalds in general, and Egill in particular, were prone to emphasise their own prowess, and Egill's three-year-old stanzas may simply be an extreme example of this (Sigurður Nordal, ed. 1933: xi–xiii).

Jón Helgason argued that the *hending* pair *gekk- : ekk-* indicates that *Eg* 17 is inauthentic, since *ekki* retains the spelling <etci> in the earliest manuscripts (Jón Helgason 1969: 157). Myrvoll's studies have shown, however, that lack of *skothending*, typically in the first verse, is a feature of *dróttkvætt* poetry down to *c.* 1000. The implications of Jón's observation are thus, if anything, the opposite of what he assumed, since lack of *hending* in the first verse offers some support of the authenticity of the stanza (*SkP* 5: 197–98). Jón also claimed that the absence of dative *-i* in *vé* in stanza 28.8 suggests that it is spurious (Jón Helgason 1969: 157). This observation most likely holds, but there is conflicting evidence in the metrically secured hiatus form *féar* in verse four (type A2k). Since Clunies Ross generally does not comment on hiatus forms, *SkP* 5 gives only arguments in favour of late dating of stanza 5 and 28. On a more positive note, Clunies Ross ignores arguments for late dates that are too vague to allow for evaluation, and so

will I (e.g. Bjarni Einarsson 1975: 195–207; Baldur Hafstað 1995; Torfi H. Tulinius 2004).

The lack of attention to *bending* structures also means that one the strongest dating criteria – the distribution of compensatory *bendingar* – is bypassed, but this is remedied in *DA*. The criterion is especially relevant for *Eg* 58 (*SkP* 5: 270) and 126 (*SkP* 5: 376), whose claim to authenticity is very strong.¹⁰ *DA* omits one instance of compensatory *bending* in stanza 127, however: *áttkak erfínytja | arfa mér til þarfan* ('I did not have an inheritance-enjoyer, an heir very useful to me'; *SkP* 5: 378). The stress and *figura etymologica* in *erf-* : *arf-*, in tandem with the similar use of a *figura etymologica* in *svik-* : *svik-* in the following couplet, indicates that this is an intentional structure, typical of Egill. Stanza 127 thus also has an unusually strong claim to authenticity.

Apart from hiatus, expletive *of* before nouns and *bending* structures, the most important dating criterion bypassed in the edition of Egill's poetry is the form *fjól* in *Höfuðlausn* 17.7, secured by end-rhyme. This is absent also in *DA*. *Fjól* was replaced by *fjólð* in the early eleventh century and is thus a strong dating criterion (Kuhn 1937: 56). In another instance, Clunies Ross emends *fjót* to *fjól*, although the manuscripts agree on the former and there is no metrical reason for emendation (*SkP* 5: 218–19). It is somewhat unfortunate that the editor here introduces what appears to be a strong dating criterion without pointing out that it cannot be used for that purpose.

As seen from this overview, a reader of *SkP* 5 who is not attentive and specialised in Old Norse metre and language may easily gain the impression that Egill's poetry is poor in dating criteria, whereas the opposite is in fact true. With some exceptions, *DA* makes up for this. By far the most important omission in *DA* is expletive *of* before nouns in Egill's long poems. Furthermore, *DA* discusses systemic changes of phonology and metre, but not changes in individual words, such as *fjól* > *fjólð*. Finally, Egill's tendency to avoid type C1 in *fornyrðislag* and *kviðuháttr* allows for the identification of additional hiatus forms, most securely so in *Höfuðlausn*. Indeed, seven of this poem's stanzas contain strong dating criteria not mentioned in Clunies Ross's edition or *DA*, and five of these point to a date of composition before c. 1000–1050 (*of* before noun and *fjól*). When reading of how Óðinn gazes at the slain on the battlefield or how Nari's sister Hel 'trod the evening meal

¹⁰ In the second of these, the emendation *gilja* > *gylfa* is problematic, since it seems to presuppose a *bending skal-* : *gylf-*. *-l-* : *-lf-* is not a permissible pairing, and the manuscripts reading gives a good *bending* (Myrvoll 2014: 63).

of the eagle' (= trampled the dead), the reader may find it useful to know that these are almost certainly the words of a tenth-century pagan, rather than the fantasies of a thirteenth-century author. I therefore hope that the present overview may serve to inform the study of Egill's poetry in *SkP* 5, which in other regards is superior to previous editions.¹¹

Droplaugarsona saga: Formal Criteria and Factual Discrepancies

This saga contains only six stanzas and has attracted limited interest from skaldic scholars, but Richard Perkins's approach to their dating is interesting. Without stating his reasons, Perkins claims that 'it is highly unlikely that any of the six stanzas in *Droplaugarsona saga* were composed by persons living around the year 1000' (*SkP* 5: 134). Apart from a debatable statement on the chronological evolution of kenning types, however, the only dating criteria he presents point to an unclear time of composition before the writing of the saga. One of these is *aðalbending* in *a* : *o*, which is not attested after c. 1200. The other is the fact that four of the six stanzas display considerable discrepancies against the surrounding prose.

As a comparison with *DA* demonstrates, the discussion of formal criteria is inadequate (I have added one instance of hiatus not found in *DA*). In addition to the two occurrences of *a* : *o*, hiatus is found in stanzas 1.4 and

¹¹ Additional minor comments on the edition of Egill's poetry: 1. The use of the term 'Craigie's law' to denote heavy dips is compatible with Craigie's article but unfortunate in other regards (*SkP* 5: 183). The conventional use of the term to refer to the prohibition of a long monosyllabic noun or adjective after a weak third position indeed describes a 'law' whose violation is highly relevant to dating, even in individual occurrences. Heavy dips do not adhere to such a law, and although these increase over time, their relevance for dating must be evaluated by frequency. In order to uphold the distinction, it is thus preferable to retain the traditional designation *heavy dips*, as in *DA* (*SkP* 5: ci–ciii). 2. *DA* omits one heavy dip: *hoggum hjaltvond skyggðan* (*SkP* 5: 275). Since the latter belongs in one of the debated Ljótr stanzas, it may be of some interest that the stanza also contains the contracted form *jörnum*. Unlike hiatus, however, contracted forms are probably not diagnostic, and the stanza also has *aðalbending* in *o* : *a*. 3. Clunies Ross's refutation of Jón Helgason's claim regarding the 'late' rhyme *gjör* in *Hofudlausn* would have benefitted from a reference to Haraldur Bernharðsson 2006 (see especially p. 251; cf. *SkP* 5: 236). 4. The exclusion of *markar* from the kenning for 'snake' in *Arinbjarnarkviða* 6 is odd, and the explanation of this departure from Finnur Jónsson's analysis does not appear to make sense, since both Finnur and Clunies Ross opt for the interpretation 'snake = Óðinn' (*SkP* 5: 339–41).

5.8, expletive *of* in 2.4 and 6.4 and compensatory rhyme in 5.1 (*ber- : hjgr-*). This is a remarkable set of dating criteria for such a small corpus.

Perkins's treatment of 5.1 is especially interesting. He notes that the verse lacks *bending* and therefore suggests that it originally contained another name than *Helgi*, perhaps *Haraldr* (*SkP* 5: 148). As far as I can tell, this may be his main reason for stating that the stanzas are not likely to be authentic. The first problem with Perkins's interpretation is that lack of *skothending* in the first verse would lend some support to the saga's attribution, rather than suggest corruption. The second is that, in fact, we are not dealing with lack of *skothending*, but with compensatory rhyme, which is a strong early dating criterion.

All formal criteria thus correspond to a parameter that Perkins explores in detail, namely discrepancies between poetry and prose. No saga has such a high proportion of discrepancies as *Droplaugarsona saga*, and as Perkins notes, one would not expect an author–poet to create such inconsistencies in his own text. The discrepancies thus point to some earlier time of composition. Partly based on Perkins's discussion and partly in spite of it, we may thus conclude that *Droplaugarsona saga* is highly suggestive of the potential inherent to correlating factual discrepancies with formal criteria.

Gísla saga: A Holistic Approach

Kari Ellen Gade's edition of the poetry in *Gísla saga* presents a thorough discussion of formal criteria as well as instances of discrepancy between poetry and prose. Her analysis is especially refreshing since the scholarly consensus has for a long time been that the poetry in *Gísla saga* was either composed by the author or slightly earlier. In 2020, Klaus Johan Myrvoll demonstrated that this view is incompatible with formal criteria in Gíslí's poetry, and furthermore that there is a correlation between discrepancies between verse and prose and early formal features (Myrvoll 2020: 254–55). Gade mainly follows Myrvoll on both accounts (*SkP* 5: 544–46).¹² As a result, the reader is presented with an excellent overview of dating criteria in

¹² Gade's clearest critique of Myrvoll's analysis is the statement that one 'late' feature (*bending* in a dip) in stanza 40 'does not obtain' (*SkP* 5: 544). In fact, however, Myrvoll himself states that this is likely to be the case, and despite appearances, Gade and Myrvoll are thus in agreement (Myrvoll 2020: 255).

one of the instances where these are most sorely needed, due to a consensus based on insufficient scrutiny.

In the end, however, Gade lands on a compromise between Myrvoll's and earlier views. Based on the fact that Gísli is not elsewhere known as a poet and the seemingly Christian elements in his poetry, she dates the 'authentic' stanzas a few decades after Gísli, 'at the intersection of the old and the new religion in Iceland' (*SkP* 5: 546). Gade here shifts to criteria whose diagnostic significance is unclear. First, the fact that Gísli is not known as a poet in other sources is somewhat remarkable, but since he did not compose for rulers, he would not have been listed in *Skáldatal* or quoted in the kings' sagas. Furthermore, Inger Helene Solvin has identified a likely indication that at least one of Gísli's stanzas was known to a precursor to Snorri (Solvin 2015: 75, 88–89; *SkP* 5: 557–58). In the treatise on poetic diction that scholars call *Litla Skálda*, the statement *hnøtr heita fylvingar* ('nuts are called *fylvingar*') is found right after kennings for human body parts. Modern colloquialisms aside, nuts are not part of the human body, but in Gísli's *lausavísa* 5, containing one of only two poetic occurrences of the word *fylvingar*, they are very nearly so. Here, these *fylvingar* fall from a woman's 'eyelash-forest' (*hvarmskógr*), and she collects *hnøtr* ('nuts') from her 'sight-hazel' (*sjónbesli*). In other words, these nuts are tears falling from the hazels of the woman's eyelashes. The stanza thus contains an association between nuts and body parts, as well as the information needed in order to draw the conclusion that *fylvingar* means 'nuts', as explained in *Litla Skálda*. In the other occurrence, *Þórsdrápa* 15, *fylvingar* appears to refer to stones (*SkP* 3: 108). The rarity of nuts in poetry in general, and the word *fylvingar* in particular, combines with *Litla Skálda*'s association of nuts with body parts to suggest that the author drew on Gísli's stanza.

Given the limited evidence, this hypothesis should perhaps be treated with caution, but it is at least worth noting that the lack of independent support for Gísli's poetic activity may not be as absolute as scholars have thought. Furthermore, a comparison to Egill's status as a poet may be useful. If he had not composed for kings and magnates, he would not have been listed in *Skáldatal*, and if we did not have his saga, we would have had only the few fragments that attracted the grammatical interest of his descendants, Snorri and Óláfr. A lack of independent attestation may thus be less significant than we think, and recourse to formal criteria is therefore a more trustworthy guide.

With regard to the 'Christian' argument, this is weak at best. Gade makes light of the statements in both versions of the saga that Gísli was influenced by Christianity in Denmark (*SkP* 5: 543–44). Under normal circumstances,

such scepticism is reasonable, but the statements fill no obvious function in the saga, and they conform to features found in the poetry. This suggests that the author may have been recording tradition, rather than trying to convey a perception of Gísli as a ‘noble heathen’ (cf. Lönnroth 2011 [1969]). Either way, Christian influence is not very useful as a dating criterion, unless we are dealing with influence from specific texts, since Christian influence of a more general nature may be detected from the ninth century onwards (see e.g. Males 2022). Gade refers to *Völuspá* as an analogue to Gísli’s poetry and suggests that the latter should be dated to the period around or after 1000, but this date is similarly based on using likely Christian influence as a strong and precise dating criterion, and the same critique therefore applies to it (*SkP* 5: 546). The kennings *sólar saldeilandi* (‘sun’s hall-ruler = God’) in stanza 15 and *aldar allvaldr* (‘mighty ruler of mankind = God [?]’) in stanza 29 are conspicuous, but they do not presuppose more than a rudimentary concept of Christian belief (*SkP* 5: 543, 572, 597).

Gade thus draws on a wide range of dating criteria, and for the most part, she adheres to the scholarly ideals of specificity and susceptibility to testing. In the end, however, she attributes diagnostic significance to two parameters that most likely do not merit such treatment. This leads her to promote the uneconomical hypothesis that the bulk of Gísli’s poetry was produced by another, slightly later poet. Gade presents no likely motivation for such early, large-scale composition of pseudonymous poetry in the name of a man who was not a poet. We find a comparable situation in some late sagas, where much of the poetry was apparently composed for insertion into the prose, but in such cases, a clear motivation is found in the act of saga-writing. Furthermore, this mode of composition does not appear to have been practiced before c. 1300, whereas sagas from the first half of the thirteenth century seem to contain mainly authentic poetry (cf. *SkP* 5: cvi). It is difficult to see what might have motivated a poet in the early eleventh century to compose spurious poetry on a scale that is otherwise only attested about a century after the writing of the first sagas of Icelanders, and Gade presents no plausible analogues.

Gade’s holistic approach is instructive. When using precise, tested and plausible criteria, she argues convincingly for the high age of much of the poetry in the saga. By contrast, when turning to *argumenta e silentio* or criteria whose diagnostic significance is doubtful, she is led to promote an uneconomical scenario that presupposes a type of motivation only known from a late stage of saga writing. Her discussion is therefore a good illustration of the benefits of remaining committed to testing and specificity.

Intertextual Dating: *Hallfreðar saga*

This section explores a parameter not discussed in the edition. It is not intended as a critique of Diana Whaley's discussion of the dating of Hallfreðr's poetry, although some additional analysis of e.g. hiatus forms would have been welcome (*SkP* 5: 870–71). Rather, since *SkP* 5 invites a discussion of the range of dating criteria available to skaldic scholars, I take the opportunity to add one. An additional motivation is that the criterion has bearing on the famous stanzas that are generally held to be the best contemporary witnesses to the sentiments of a reluctant convert. In order for the stanzas to merit such treatment, dating is crucial.

Hallfreðr's so-called 'conversion stanzas' have attracted much scholarly attention, but formal criteria in them are few. This, as well as the fact that an authentic testimony of this kind almost seems 'too good to be true', may invite the suspicion that the stanzas were in fact composed for the saga. Interestingly, however, Einarr Skúlason (c. 1090–1060) paraphrased the last stanza preceding the conversion stanzas as well as the first of these. In the following, I summarise an analysis that seems to have appeared too late to make it into the edition (Males 2020: 80–85).

In his *Øxarflokkur*, Einarr repeatedly plays on the name of Freyja's daughter *Hnoss*, which means 'precious object'. Based on Finnur Jónsson's edition (1912–15) and Meissner's *Die Kenningar den Skalden* (1921), Einarr would appear to be the only poet referring to *Hnoss*. This is strange, however, since Einarr otherwise makes a point of alluding to rare mythological references in earlier poetry, but he does not appear to have invented them.¹³ Doing so would have defeated the purpose of the skaldic game of knowledge, in which Einarr engaged with much gusto.¹⁴

In reality, however, the absence of *Hnoss* in Finnur Jónsson's edition and Meissner's catalogue is due to Finnur's choice of a confused manuscript variant and emendation in the stanza immediately preceding the conversion stanzas in the saga. In order to make sense of the text, Finnur invented the word *núflaust* and translated it as 'without difficulty'.¹⁵ Whaley judiciously adopted the reading of other manuscripts *nú ák Sírrar mey dýra* 'now I own

¹³ Notably *gylðis kindar gómsparri* 'the gum-spar of the wolf's offspring [SWORD]' in *Geisli* 48, alluding to the only other kenning drawing on the sword in Fenrir's mouth, Eyvindr skáldaspillir's *Fenris varra sparri* 'prop of the lips of Fenrir [SWORD]' (*SkP* 7: 46; *SkP* 1: 223).

¹⁴ Cf., for instance, his *offjósti* stanza (*SkP* 3: 173). See discussion in Males 2020: 77–89.

¹⁵ It is not the case, however, that Finnur's verse is unmetrical, as stated in *SkP* 5: 882, since *burr* has a short root vowel. In any event, referring to a heavy dip as 'unmetrical' is a bit strong.

the precious daughter of Sýr <= Freyja> [Hnoss (*bnoss* ‘treasure’)]’ (*SkP* 5: 881). Here we find our lost, early reference to Hnoss, and just as in Einarr’s case, it is used in an *ofljóst* construction (Hnoss > *bnoss*). This unique correspondence indicates that Einarr alluded to Hallfreðr, and the assumption is corroborated by an allusion from Einarr’s *Geisli* to the following stanza in *Hallfreðar saga*, the first of the conversion stanzas. This stanza reads:

Fyrr vas hitt es harra
 Hliðskjálfar gatk sjalfan
 – skipt es á gumna giptu –
 geðskjótan vel blóta.

In former times it was different, when I could sacrifice well to the swift-minded lord of Hliðskjálfr <Óðinn’s high seat> himself [= Óðinn]; there has been a change in the fortunes of men. (*SkP* 5: 883)

The second half of *Geisli* 19 reads:

Fyrr vas hitt es¹⁶ harra
 hauðrtjalda brá dauða
 happ- (nýtast mér) -mætu
 (máltól) skini solar.

It happened previously that the excellently fortunate shining of the sun ceased through the death of the lord of earth-tents [SKY/HEAVEN > = God (= Christ)]; speech-tools [ORGANS OF SPEECH] are of use to me. (*SkP* 7: 22)

Einarr has here transformed a reference to Óðinn to apply to Christ. The fact that both of Einarr’s allusions are to stanzas that are closely associated in transmission, being Hallfreðr’s *lausavísa* 5 and 6, rules out coincidence as a plausible explanation of the similarities. Transmission also excludes the opposite line of influence, from Einarr to Hallfreðr (who would then of course have to be Pseudo-Hallfreðr). There is no obvious reason why a pseudonymous poet would turn to one semi-grammatical and one hagiographic poem by Einarr to create such allusions, and the choice of Einarr rather than some earlier poet would in any event have been odd. By contrast, Einarr is known to have engaged in this kind of allusion, and there are thus strong reasons to assume that the influence went from Hallfreðr to

¹⁶ ‘er’ Bergsbók (here normalized to *es*): ‘at’ Flateyjarbók (*SkP* 7: 22). Unlike *SkP*, I choose *es* rather than *at* in accordance with Hallfreðr’s stanza (which is not mentioned in *SkP*), but this does not affect the semantics or the question of whether this is a quotation or not, since minor changes were common in that context.

Einarr. Einarr's allusions presumably served to place him within a tradition of prominent skalds, and we may therefore assume that he saw Hallfreðr's stanzas as authentic, half a century or more before the first sagas of Icelanders were written. These allusions therefore amount to strong dating criteria.

Such clear-cut cases are rare, but when available, there is every reason to add them to other dating criteria. The case for authenticity of Hallfreðr's conversion stanzas is thus considerably stronger than what Whaley conveys, although she leans towards the same conclusion (*SkP* 5: 870–71).

Archaisation in *Kormáks saga* and *Víglundar saga*

In her edition of the poetry in *Kormáks saga*, Edith Marold presents numerous formal criteria that point towards an early date (*SkP* 5: 1017–20). She also notes, however, that some stanzas appear to exhibit an overarchaising style involving types B and C and lack of *aðalbinding* in even verses. This applies to stanzas 17–19.4, 30, 77–79, 82. These are the same criteria that correlate with other indications of late dating also in *Egils saga*, and the peculiar archaising style of spurious stanzas in *Kormáks saga* and *Egils saga* has been noted in recent studies (Males 2011; Myrvoll 2014: 118–25; Myrvoll 2020: 229; Males 2020: 219–32, 244–45). It is somewhat conspicuous that none of these studies are referred when drawing on identical criteria in order to arrive at similar conclusions about some of the same stanzas, but the important point is that yet another scholar has now tested their diagnostic validity. Thus, for instance, Marold notes a correlation with a violation of Craigie's law in stanza 78, further strengthening the case. It now seems highly likely that at least stanzas 77–79 and 82 are spurious, and Marold, Myrvoll and I agree on this point. Marold also makes a relatively strong case for stanzas 17–19.4 (*SkP* 5: 1053–56). With regard to other stanzas, it remains an open question how far we ought to go in taking 'suspect' features as diagnostic of pseudonymous composition, since it would seem that irregular features in Kormákr's authentic poetry inspired the use of similar features in poetry composed for the saga. Apart from stanzas 77–79 and 82, it may be unlikely that the poetry in *Kormáks saga* will allow for an equally precise stratification as that of *Egils saga*, but further clarity is not out of the question.

Klaus Johan Myrvoll's discussion of *Víglundar saga* is interesting from several perspectives. This is a late saga that has attracted limited scholarly interest. As becomes clear from Myrvoll's overview of linguistic criteria,

all poetry in it was apparently composed for the saga (*SkP* 5: 1404). Also in some other late sagas, all or the bulk of the poetry seems to have been composed for the saga, but *Víglundar saga* is peculiar in following a model displaying rare stylistic features, namely *Kormáks saga*. Myrvoll's metrical observations bring this out and allow us to reconstruct the methods of a late imitator in remarkable detail.

The *Víglundr* poet displays anacrusis, presumably in imitation of Kormákr's use of type B and C in even lines (*SkP* 5: 1018, 1405). This partly flawed imitation is highly interesting for showing that in order to achieve an 'archaic' structure, this poet added a perceived early feature to that of the later standard, resulting in hypermetric lines, rather than breaking completely with later norms by employing type B or C in even lines. In other words, the unstressed beginnings of even verses in early poetry were so striking to this poet's ear that he did not recognise that the verses themselves were of the standard, six-position type. It was their strangeness, not their familiar traits, that stood out.

Another feature is at least as interesting. After *c.* 1000, only Snorri can be shown to have understood and regularised the feature of compensatory *bendingar* in his *Háttatal*, or at least, so it seemed until the publication of *SkP* 5 (Males 2020: 34–37). It is now clear, however, that the *Víglundr* poet also did so, presumably because he chose the poetry in *Kormáks saga* as his model (*SkP* 5: 1405). It is understandable that scholars have not focused on obviously late and spurious poetry in their identification of occurrences of this early feature, but in order to test the criterion's validity, it is necessary also to explore whether it may be found in later poets aiming to archaïse. We may now conclude that there is at least one instance of this, but by all appearances, the circumstance required was that of taking one of the few early poets where this feature is prominent as the main model.

In one sense, the presence of compensatory *bendingar* in *Víglundar saga* may seem to make the criterion less reliable, but I would argue the opposite. When dealing with features that are in principle susceptible to stylistic imitation, and indeed many other features as well, aiming for perfect correspondences between the criteria and chronology is often unrealistic. Rather, the strengths and potential weaknesses of each criterion must be evaluated in detail and the hypothesis tested against a range of mutually independent criteria. In this instance, we see that the *Víglundr* poet succeeded in imitating some early *bending* structures but not others, such as the 'hierarchical principle' or *aðalbendingar* in even verses, and he did not understand the principles behind even verses with an unstressed beginning (*SkP* 5: 1405).

Of course, this poet had not conducted a detailed study in order to evaluate which stanzas may be spurious in his model saga, and the discipline of historical linguistics lay centuries in the future. To some extent, then, he was bound to imitate an imitator, and the latter can himself be discerned by extreme exaggeration of Kormákr's typical features, as well as through forms that would have been unmetrical before c. 1200. In the end, then, our dating criteria have not become weaker for not being absolute, but stronger for being better explored, and in the process, we have gained new knowledge about the methods of an interesting fourteenth-century saga author.

This author-poet also imitated another feature typical of Kormákr, namely half-kennings. As noted in the section 'SkP 5 and Probability' above, Clunies Ross has collected examples of half-kennings, and her departure from Finnur Jónsson's stylistic ideals in all likelihood brings us closer to those of the skalds. Myrvoll has a useful overview of the debate on half-kennings, and he notes that their use in *Víglundar saga* is indebted to that of *Kormáks saga* (SkP 5: 1406). The matter is complicated, however, by the fact that Marold in her edition of Kormákr's poetry stays true to Finnur's ideals and avoids half-kennings as far as possible. Taking another view than Marold, Clunies Ross has collected likely instances of half-kennings in *Kormáks saga* that are not, in fact, presented as such in the edition (SkP 5: cxxxv n. 4). In light of Myrvoll's edition and discussion, the case for half-kennings in *Kormáks saga* is even stronger than it previously was, since it is for other reasons clear that the *Víglundr* poet imitated the poetry in *Kormáks saga*, and why would he have opted for the marked feature of half-kennings if these were not prominent in his model? It is unfortunate that such observations have not been allowed to guide the editing of the poetry in *Kormáks saga*, but Clunies Ross's list and Myrvoll's edition serve to mitigate the effects of this choice.

Concluding Discussion

SkP 5's rich but uneven exploration of dating criteria is an excellent starting point for a revitalisation of the scholarly discourse on the topic. Not only *DA*, but also a larger number of editors than the ones discussed here, take formal criteria as their main point of departure for their discussions of dating. On the whole, *SkP 5* serves to rehabilitate such criteria, the value of which has often been downplayed in scholarship from about the 1960s

onwards. Since formal features typically provide the most precise, frequent and intersubjectively controllable criteria, *SkP* 5 represents a highly positive development. In some instances, formal criteria are crucial for the rebuttal of poorly founded claims. This is notably the case in Gade's edition of the poetry in *Gísla saga*, but another important example, not mentioned above, is Kate Heslop's edition of the so-called *Máblíðingavísur* in *Eyrbyggja saga*. These stanzas are of particular interest for being highly personal and unusually pacific. In a detailed analysis of them, Russell Poole discusses early formal features, but curiously, he decides against their testimony (Poole 1985). Heslop notes that formal criteria point towards early composition, and on this basis, she revisits Poole's argument and finds that it is not only at odds with linguistic features but also lacks factual support in the poetry. Although brief, Heslop's evaluation is thus a school-book example of scholarly method, and it illustrates how factual arguments may be correlated with formal features (*SkP* 5: 403–04).

Overall, the most glaring omission in *SkP* 5 is the relative absence of formal dating criteria in the analysis of Egill's poetry, his being both the largest and in several ways most interesting corpus. *DA* is not entirely sufficient to remedy this, mainly due to the omission of expletive *of* before nouns in the long poems. Consulting this article in tandem with *DA* and the edition provides an overview of available criteria.

Kari Ellen Gade is most consistent in correlating formal criteria with discrepancies between prose and poetry, both in her edition of *Gísla saga* and *Króka-Refs saga*. While *Gísla saga* contains a number of discrepancies, Gade notes that none are found in *Króka-Refs saga* (*SkP* 5: 1185). This observation is consistent with her hypothesis that the poetry in the saga is spurious, assuming the author would not create inconsistencies when composing poetry for the saga. Richard Perkins's edition of the poetry in *Droplaugarsona saga* provides an interesting counterexample, where a correlation of discrepancies and formal criteria would have provided rich and internally consistent evidence.

Gade's discussion of the poetry in *Gísla saga* is also interesting for showing how an evaluation of precise criteria whose diagnostic validity is open to evaluation suggest a plausible hypothesis, whereas likely non-diagnostic criteria lead Gade to present a hypothesis that cannot easily be reconciled with literary developments. While the desirability of specificity and testing is universally acknowledged within the sciences, humanists are often more ambivalent in this regard, and reminders of the epistemological benefits of these ideals are therefore welcome.

As seen from this overview, *SkP 5* explores a considerable range of dating criteria. One category that I found missing and that may at times be useful is quotation or allusion, since the skalds' penchant for using unique expressions suggests that conspicuous verbal similarities are often intentional (Wills 2021). Another aspect that may be worth considering is how to correlate criteria that occur with some frequency, such as the ones discussed in *DA*, with others that are rare or unique. The latter may include, for instance, discrepancies with the prose, quotations, factual observations (baleens, the establishment of Lund, etc.) and infrequent linguistic archaisms such as *ffl*. Linguists often favour investigations of the type represented by *DA*, but on occasion, non-structural criteria may be crucial, and correlating the two types of evidence is often impeded by discipline-specific methodologies. This problem relates to scholarly conventions, however, and not to epistemology. As long as criteria are specific and open to some degree of testing, they may be correlated with each other. How this is to be done is up to the scholar, but I hope that *SkP 5* and the present discussion of dating methodologies may serve to convey that there is a wider range of viable possibilities than is evident from most publications on the topic.

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