

Rigspúla and Viking Age Society

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The date of *Rigspúla* has been the subject of considerable discussion, and a number of scholars have maintained that this "Eddic" poem was actually composed in the thirteenth century. Adherents of this hypothesis have not, however, tried to compare the poem with the theories of society expressed in works that are known to date from this period, such as *A Speech against the Bishops* (c. 1200) and *The King's Mirror* (c. 1250). Such a comparison shows so great a difference regarding the understanding of society as to make it likely that the poem represents the social thought of an earlier period. On the basis of this observation, I shall try to examine *Rigspúla* as a myth about Viking Age society.