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T. Bolton.

Sommario/riassunto

The reign of King Cnut the Great (1016–1035) marks a pivotal point in the history of both England and Scandinavia, yet his conquests and his consolidation of power remain under-appreciated and rarely studied. Almost all existing scholarship has been geographically centred on either England or Scandinavia. However, this study, through a series of studies of individual aspects of his rise to power in those regions, seeks to encompass his entire dominion, and cast new light on our understanding of the nature of this political unit and contemporary figures' conceptions of it. The result is a fresh impression of a number of aspects of Cnut's rise to power as well as a new interpretation of this 'empire'.