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| 1. Record Nr. | UNINA9910960043103321 |
| Autore | Bolton Timothy |
| Titolo | The empire of Cnut the Great : conquest and the consolidation of power in Northern Europe in the early eleventh century / / by Timothy Bolton |
| Pubbl/distr/stampa | Leiden ; ; Boston, : Brill, 2009 |
| ISBN | 1-282-39849-0 9786612398490 90-474-4330-6 |
| Descrizione fisica | 1 online resource (367 p.) |
| Collana | The northern world, , 1569-1462 ; ; v. 40 |
| Disciplina | 942.01/81092 |
| Soggetti | Danes - England - History Great Britain History Canute, 1017-1035 Great Britain Kings and rulers Biography Denmark Kings and rulers Biography Norway Kings and rulers Biography |
| Lingua di pubblicazione | Inglese |
| Formato | Materiale a stampa |
| Livello bibliografico | Monografia |
| Note generali | Description based upon print version of record. |
| Nota di bibliografia | Includes bibliographical references (p. [325]-343) and index. |
| Nota di contenuto | Preliminary Materials / T. Bolton -- General Introduction / T. Bolton -- Chapter One. Introduction / T. Bolton -- Chapter Two. National Government In Cnut's Reign: The Royal Court / T. Bolton -- Chapter Three. The Government In The Localities Of Southumbrian England In The Reign Of Cnut / T. Bolton -- Chapter Four. Cnut And The English Church / T. Bolton -- Chapter Five. Cnut And The Imperium Of Late Anglo-Saxon England: Northumbria, Wales, Scotland And Ireland / T. Bolton -- Chapter Six. Introduction / T. Bolton -- Chapter Seven. Cnut And The Development Of The 'Machinery Of Control' In Western And Central Denmark / T. Bolton -- Chapter Eight. Cnut, Eastern Denmark And The Baltic: The Struggle For Supremacy / T. Bolton -- Chapter Nine. Danish Supremacy In Scandinavia In The Early Eleventh Century: Cnut And The Regimes Of Norway And Sweden / T. Bolton -- Chapter Ten. The Conquest Of Norway And The Development Of Imperial Aspirations / T. Bolton -- Conclusion / T. Bolton -- Appendix A / T. Bolton -- Appendix B / T. Bolton -- Bibliography / T. Bolton -- Index / T. Bolton. |

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'.
