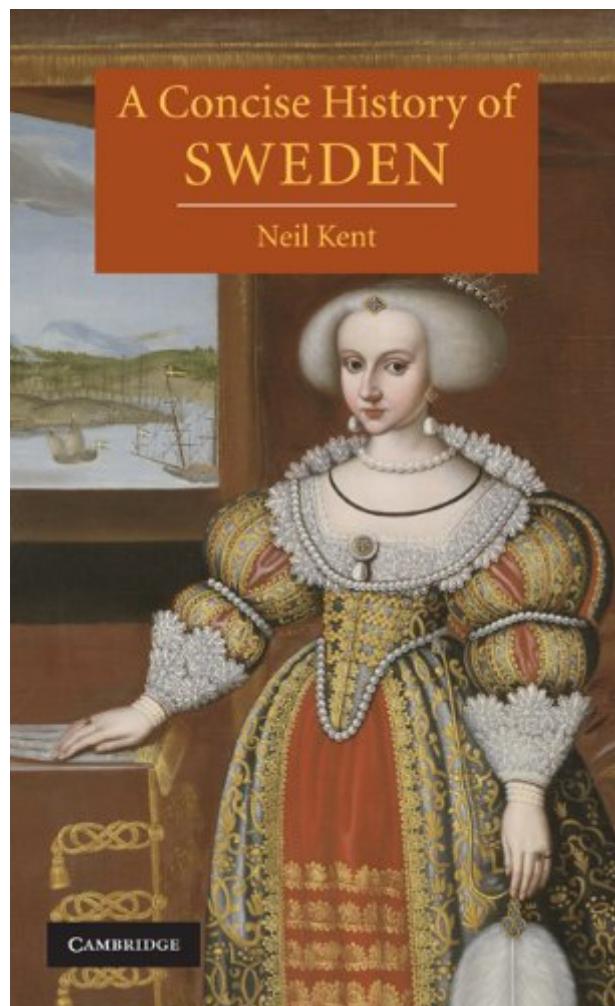


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A Concise History Of Sweden (Cambridge Concise Histories)



Synopsis

Neil Kent's book sweeps through Sweden's history from the Stone Age to the present day. Early coverage includes Viking hegemony, the Scandinavian Union, the Reformation and Sweden's political zenith as Europe's greatest superpower in the seventeenth century, while later chapters explore the Swedish Enlightenment, royal absolutism, the commitment to military neutrality and Pan-Scandinavianism. The author brings his account up to date by focusing on more recent developments: the rise of Social Democracy, the establishment of the welfare state, the country's acceptance of membership in the European Union and its progressive ecological programme. The book successfully combines the politics, economics and social and cultural mores of one of the world's most successfully functioning and humane societies. This is an informative and entertaining account for students and general readers.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The book is a dull and uninspired recitation of facts related to leaders of and trends in Swedish history. Concise, yes, but concise to the point of evading explanation constitution of the Swedish

state and motives and culture of the Swedish people. Readers looking for into the "why" of these topics may be best advised to look elsewhere. It certainly is interesting that in Sweden, circa 1626, "in contrast to the situation in almost all the rest of Europe, the major segments of the population enjoyed their own political representation, at least to some degree." But why? The author frustrates the reader by stopping short of providing a quick explanation for this circumstance and many other interesting circumstances as well. The author strays from history when, in the Conclusion, he accuses Swedes of political hypocrisy with respect to environmental issues because "Swedes in general love their aeroplane lights to the tropics . . . whatever the environmental costs." He also also offers his take on recent climate science, observing that certainly, "the hot summers of the late 1770s and early 1780s are comparable with those of today and it is by no means clear to many what, if any, significant degree human industry, as opposed to solar activity, has played a major role in the changes." Such unmeasured and unsourced comments may, for some readers, call into question generalizations appearing earlier in the work.

As the title reads, the book was indeed a concise history, enlightening and exciting. The text was quite in depth and, as a result, it was a lengthy read that might be difficult for those not too familiar with Swedish geography and/or basic history. Highly recommended for those that love reading history.

If you want a truly concise history of Sweden, this would be a good book to read. I am of Swedish decent and appreciated the overall history of this country of some of my forefathers. Neil moves the country forward century to century so that this reader finished the book with a better understanding of what made Sweden the country it is.

Very useful introduction to Sweden. A must for a first visitor to this country.

This is one of the few -- if not the only -- survey histories of Sweden available on Kindle. It's clearly written and the facts all seem to be in order. But this volume is indeed "concise," so much so that more often than not it feels like a list of names and dates strung around with barebones syntax. The effect is that even a determined and highly caffeinated reader might find one's eyes start to glaze over.

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