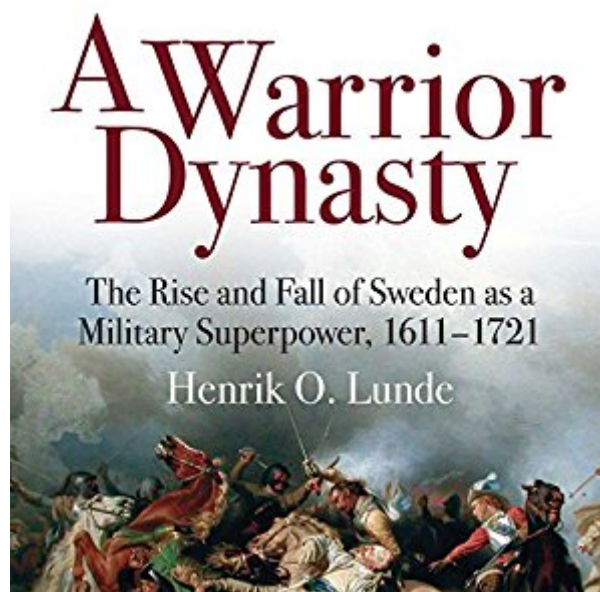




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A Warrior Dynasty: The Rise And Fall Of Sweden As A Military Superpower 1611-1721



Synopsis

This audiobook examines the meteoric rise of Sweden as the pre-eminent military power in Europe during the Thirty Years War during the 1600s, and then follows its line of warrior kings into the next century until the Swedes finally meet their demise, in an overreach into the vastness of Russia. A small Scandinavian nation, with at most one and a half million people and scant internal resources of its own, there was small logic to how Sweden could become the dominant power on the Continent. That Sweden achieved this was due to its leadership - a case-study in history when pure military skill, and that alone, could override the demographic and economic factors which have in modern times been termed so pre-eminent. Once Protestantism emerged, via Martin Luther, the most devastating war in European history ensued, as the Holy Roman Empire sought to reassert its authority by force. Into this bloody maelstrom stepped Gustav Adolf of Sweden, a brilliant tactician and strategist, who with his finely honed Swedish legions proceeded to establish a new authority in northern Europe. Gustav, as brave as he was brilliant, was finally killed while leading a cavalry charge at the Battle of Ltzen. He had innovated, however, tactics and weaponry that put his successors in good stead, as Sweden remained a great power, rivaled only by France and Spain in terms of territory in Europe. And then one of his successors, Karl XII, turned out to be just as great a military genius as Gustav himself, and as the year 1700 arrived, Swedish armies once more burst out in all directions. Karl, like Gustav, assumed the throne while still a teenager, but immediately displayed so much acumen, daring and skill that chroniclers could only compare him, like Gustav, to Alexander the Great. This book examines thoroughly, yet in highly readable fashion, the century during which Swedish military power set an example for all Europe.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I enjoyed it immensely. It was the first book I've read on the 30 Years War. (although only about half of the book was about the war) Excellent battle descriptions and historical narrative. For years I've heard of the 30 Years War as a religious war, the author brushed that off with a sentence or two. I kind of wished he would have done a better job of proving that it was a political war and not really a religious war. I also wish he would have done a little more in the line of character development, especially of Gustav Adolf. I know that this was a wide sweeping overview, but I certainly didn't feel like I knew any of the characters in this book. Once again I'd like to thank the author for his work. Excellent narrative, and given the immensity of the subject I guess he couldn't include everything.

Linda provides an excellent overview of Sweden's rise to great power status in 17th century Europe. The book has a wealth of information about dynastic diplomacy and war in the Baltic and central European regions. He gives particular attention to Vasa dynasty kings Gustav Adolph and Karl XII. He argues that Sweden's economic base was too narrow to sustain great power ambitions. He is less convincing in attributing Sweden's rise to Gustav's early adoption of linear infantry tactics combined with shock heavy cavalry formations. (Much of the credit for innovation should really go to the Dutch, especially Maurice of Nassau) Linde does little original research, and relies on previously published sources_ to whom he scrupulously attributes arguments. Overall, this was a fascinating treatment of a region that usually gets little attention beyond the thirty years war and Charles' failed invasion of Russia. I would highly recommend this for any reader interested in 17th century history, or the challenges of maintaining great power status. Paul Kennedy would relate to this book.

Good succinct analysis of the successes and failures of these extraordinary Swedish "Warrior Kings." An interesting read! Focuses mainly on Gustav II Adolf and Karl (Charles) XII.

I thought this book gave me a lot of detail about a period of history I wasn't aware of. I'm glad I read it.

I believe I've read all of Henrik Lunde's military history books, or if I have missed reading one or two they are on my bookshelf waiting to be read and enjoyed. I bought this book because of two simple facts, I've liked his other books and I wanted to read a book about a period when Sweden was a military power. I normally read world war two history so this was all new to me. I love how Mr Lunde explains in his introduction his arguments in his book and why and how

he sets out to accomplish his goal. You know exactly what you are getting when you start his book. He gives a great introduction to set the stage for the time period for people like me who have no clue what really is going on and when you follow along you get a good sense of how the conflicts are going. The asides and quick summaries the author makes are enjoyable also. He will very succinctly make the key point that I think other authors may assume you will catch yourself and make note of. Sometimes it's better to state it explicitly instead of assuming the reader will jump to the appropriate conclusion. I recommend his books, if you have an interest in Scandinavian military history, I would suggest you read them all.

Excellent history on the rise and fall of Sweden and the 30 years War and the little known bellicose frenzy Swedish race!

A Warrior Dynasty "The Rise and Fall of Sweden as a Military Superpower, 1611-1721, by Henrik O. Lunde ranks as one of the top literary manuscripts on this subject of all Scandinavian literature, a real tribute to not only the Swedes, but to all Scandinavians. The author's focus is on two larger than life Swedish hero kings, Gustav II Adolf and Karl XII, neither to reach 40 years of age, who propelled, and kept, Sweden in the dominant military position in the world for a period of over 100 years (1611-1721). Both of these Swedish kings possessed similar traits that go far to explain their, respective, extraordinary successes on the battlefield: (a) a fearlessness demonstrated repeatedly as they led their troops from the front "and blessed with a charmed luck that let them survive so many (but not all) battles; (b) decisiveness in battle coupled with speed of moving and positioning their troops for battle that consistency surprised their foes ("The Swedes came as if they had flown."); (c) an offensive (as opposed to defensive) mindset that often turned defeat into victory; (d) reliance (as respective Kings of Sweden) on military (action) solutions, as opposed to diplomatic (talking) solutions.; (e) meticulous planning prior to battle. This book succeeds in uncovering and shining the light of history on a country that at the time in question had a population of less than two million, but was able to rule the world through its military might. This was possible due to the military leadership, the soldiers, the strategies and technology developed and utilized and the concept of "war paying for itself." The Thirty Years War (1618-1648) was a religious war between Protestant and Catholic nations. "All the wars of Europe are now blended into one" wrote Gustav Adolf, and then invaded Germany. Once over, devastation could be found throughout the continent, with one third of central Europe's population dead. One of the benefits of a book written by this author, is his personal military

background “ from being in the trenches” (experience in both commando and line combat units, instructor, and planner at the highest levels), so that he is both positioned to, and unafraid to, offer his insights and wisdom on the lessons learned, and suggested actions that either could have been taken, or should be taken. Read this book. Five Stars.

Very readable and keeps your attention throughout.

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