

· 域外风情丛书 ·



SWEDISH SCENES



瑞典 风情录

乔长森 陈寅涛 焦仁康 编著

英汉对照



东方出版中心

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内 容 提 要

本书是《域外风情》丛书系列(第2辑)中的一种,采用英汉对照形式编著而成,可供具有中等英语程度的读者自学英语之用。全书用30余篇短文,较广泛地介绍了瑞典的地域风貌、历史概况、政体特点以及文化、艺术、经济、社会等各方面的状况,有助于我国广大读者了解瑞典这个北欧国家的风土人情。全书内容丰富,既有知识性,又具趣味性,是较理想的英语自学辅助读物。

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1. Sweden in a Nutshell

With its area of 450 000 square kilometres, Sweden is the fourth largest country in Europe. The distance from north to south is 1 600 kilometres. Sweden lies far to the north, yet the climate is relatively mild. thanks to the Gulf Stream which warms the surrounding seas. There are four distinct seasons, and rain and snow are usually associated with areas of low pressure coming in from the west. Although climatic conditions vary considerably from north to south, in the winter the temperature falls to below zero all over the country, while in the summer you can slip into the sea for a swim even in the far north.

Sweden has a population of about 8.5 million people. The population is dispersed throughout the country, yet there are still huge tracts of largely uninhabited land. Over a third of the population lives in the three largest cities of Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö.

Over half of Sweden is covered by forest, mostly coniferous, what deciduous woodland there is lies mainly in the south. Less than one

tenth of the country is under cultivation. Lakes and watercourses abound, and there are great archipelagos along the coasts, especially in the east. Two large islands in the Baltic Sea, Öland and Gotland, are also part of Sweden—both are noted for their beauty and distinctive natural charm. Along the border with Norway runs a range of mountains some 1 000 kilometres long and 100 kilometres wide.

Sweden has what is known as a “mixed economy”, meaning that while most enterprises are privately owned, the postal and telecommunications services, the railways and a large part of the power industry are owned and run by the State. The State also owns certain companies outright. Medical services, schools, universities and social services generally are also organized and run by the public authorities.

Forests, iron ore and water power have for centuries been Sweden's greatest natural assets and were the basic raw materials of Sweden's industrialization 100 years ago. Today the number of industrial workers is decreasing steadily, and more and more people are finding employment in the health care, administrative and services sectors. Farmers and fishermen are few, but Sweden is nevertheless self-sufficient in all essential foodstuffs.

Sweden's defence policy is to remain neutral

and nonaligned.

IMMIGRATION TO SWEDEN

Immigration to Sweden is by no means a modern phenomenon. Over the course of the centuries, Hanseatic Germans, Walloons, Scots and many others have immigrated to this country. In modern times, however, immigration really started with the Second World War, when almost 200 000 people fled to Sweden. During the post-war period labour was in short supply, and immigration was found to be one way of helping satisfy the country's industrial needs. At the beginning of the seventies, with conditions on the labour market getting increasingly difficult, most labour immigration was stopped entirely. During recent years, with the exception of immigrants from the other Nordic countries, most new arrivals have been either refugees or relatives of other immigrants or Swedes.

THE MUNICIPALITIES

Sweden is divided into 284 districts known as municipalities, some large, some small; some consist of a single large city, others of great stretches of countryside with only a handful of small towns and villages. In most aspects the municipalities are entirely self-governing, and they are entitled to tax their inhabitants at

whatever rate they wish. However, the national Government and Riksdag may still pass legislation requiring them to provide specific services or amenities. In other words, although their organization may vary considerably, all municipalities must, for example, provide schools and certain social welfare services. In most municipalities you will also find banks and post offices, an employment office, a medical and health care service, clubs and associations, cultural amenities, a library, interpreter services, etc.

Each municipality is headed by a popularly elected policy-making body known as the municipal council. The council in turn elects the local "government"—the municipal board. There will also be a number of municipal committees entrusted with specific areas such as education or housing.

THE RIKSDAG AND GOVERNMENT

Sweden's supreme policy-making body is the Riksdag, which is made up of 349 members elected in constituencies all over the country. Its principal tasks are to pass legislation, make decisions on national taxation and government finance, and supervise the work of the government and public authorities.

The work of actually running the country is

done by the Government under the leadership of a Prime Minister elected by the Riksdag. The other members of the Government are appointed by the Prime Minister. Most are head of a ministry responsible for a specific field of national affairs and are concerned principally with assisting the Government and preparing proposals for new legislation. As a rule, Swedish ministries are fairly small, and Government decisions are implemented by a large number of national and municipal authorities responsible for running the country on a practical, day-to-day basis.

NATIONAL AND MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES

Legislation—the making of laws—is one of the means available to the Riksdag and Government for keeping the work of the various authorities within their control. Some laws are highly specific and state the duties of the authority concerned in every detail; others are worded more generally so as to leave the authority scope for individual decisions on how the law is to be interpreted.

Civil servants are expected to be impartial, to abide by the law and to comply with all decisions made by the authority in question. If you believe a decision made by a public servant to be incorrect, you can often lodge appeal simply

by submitting a written complaint to his or her immediate superior. It is the officer's duty to inform you of the correct procedure and whom to approach. There are also specially appointed officers—the Parliamentary Ombudsmen and the Office of the Chancellor of Justice—whose principal task is to scrutinize the work of civil servants and the public authorities. Anyone considering himself to have been unfairly treated by an authority or public servant is entitled to appeal to the Parliamentary Ombudsmen.

THE POLICE

The main tasks of the Swedish police are to prevent and investigate crime and generally to enforce the law of the realm. In addition, they are expected to provide assistance and protection wherever necessary. Efforts to help prevent crime are made, for example, by holding special information sessions in the schools. The police supervise and control traffic and take action if they find someone speeding, driving under the influence or breaking one of the traffic regulations. There are local police stations in all municipalities, and it is to one of them you should turn if you need help. In many towns there are also neighbourhood police whose duty is to help the residents of that particular part of town.

2. The Vikings

Who were the Vikings? The word itself antedates the movement and probably stems from *vik*, the word meaning inlet or fjord in all Nordic languages. Vikings, then, were men of the fjords. Some were pirates, some were as much traders as raiders, probably most were an adventurous and opportunistic blend of the two. One of the simplest and briefest definitions is Holger Arbman's: "The viking was a combination of robber and merchant in nordic ships along foreign coasts." The Vikings were the aggressors, and they were brutal in an age of brutality. Yet they lacked the fanaticism of nationalistic hatred or ideological zealotry.

The Viking movement was a Pan-Scandinavian phenomenon. Vikings came from all round the Scandinavian lands and seas, and they sailed anywhere accessible by ships. Though rough in manners, they, like the more cultivated Arabs, were the cosmopolitans of their day. Their fleets were often composed of men from diverse localities, for courage and strength were the only qualifications that mattered. It may be that the

larger and more distant fleets were augmented by non-Scandinavian recruits, Irish, Finns, or Slavs. But it was the Norsemen who led the way, whose technical and nautical skill dominated the seas. It was the Nordic vikings who gave the Franks a navy and their seafaring vocabulary, including their terms for the rigging, the parts of the ship, and seamanship.

Viking activity dates back at least to the sixth century and probably much earlier, and it continued into the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Its heyday was the period of some three centuries from about 800 to about 1100 A.D. It was braked and finally halted not by the victimized peoples overseas but by the increasing pressures from government and business enterprise within the North itself. We can envision the entire movement to have encompassed three broad thrusts: to the south along the coasts of France and the Iberian Peninsula and swinging around into the Mediterranean as far as Sicily and southern Italy; to the west into the British Isles and beyond to Iceland, Greenland, and Vinland; to the east across the Baltic Sea and on to the Black, Caspian, and Aegean Seas. The southward and westward thrusts were the work of men from the areas we know today as Norway and Denmark, with a few from the western coast of Sweden. The presence of Swedes in many of

the western campaigns is clearly recorded and is evidenced likewise by the booty buried in Swedish soil, such as some thirty thousand Anglo-Saxon coins. The eastward thrust was largely the work of men from the Swedish lands and is a vital part of Swedish history. The outward thrusts in all three directions exploded almost simultaneously.

The eastward surge of the Vikings may have been more planned and purposeful than historians have generally assumed. Basic organization was highly developed, and this may have sprung from defensive need. Territorially the base of operations was Uppland, the cradle of the Swedes, centered in Old Uppsala. By the opening of the Viking era they had extended their authority to the south and west of Lake Mälär into Southmanland and Westmanland. By about 850 the Baltic island of Gotland had come under the dominion of the Swedish kings. The dynamic Swedes of Uppland were expanding. Even their homeland, patches of fertile land interlaced with water passages and outcroppings of rock, was still rising out of the sea, making available additional tillable soil that did not have to be won by force of arms. The network of water channels plus the far-reaching drainage complex of Lake Mälär provided ideal routes for traders and also for pirates and or-

ganized invaders who could stab quickly into the heart of settlements.

The systematic political organization of the Swedes was related primarily to sea power. In the German lands, in England, and even in France the general obligation of military service was recognized, but in each country the system had to be adapted to individual needs. In Sweden the organization was unusually detailed. The main Uppland regions were divided into ship districts called hundreds. Each hundred was obligated to provide two ships, each with its complement of men, for the warfleet. In Roslagen each hundred provided one ship. Farther north the sparse and scattered people were not required to send ships, for they were left with the responsibility of maintaining their own defense as best they could. For Uppland and its subordinate Roslagen the records suggest that in early times the fleet went out each spring—for conquest, for maintenance of colonial settlements, or with the idea that attack was the best defense. The commander of this ever-ready navy was the *jarl*, an officer second only to the king in power. This system of organization spread southward along the coasts of Sweden and to Gotland.

Strict naval laws governed the men of the fleet: punishments for crimes were two to four