



The turbulent history of early modern Sweden

The history of early modern Sweden is a turbulent one. Over almost three hundred years, the country experienced a series of political upheavals, in which one type of political regime was replaced by a radically different one.

Drawing on both history and the social sciences, the authors of *Shifting Regimes* present a novel interpretation of Sweden's early modern political history, claiming that this conflict-ridden history is highly relevant for understanding the process of state formation in early modern Europe. In comparative studies, sixteenth-century Sweden is sometimes highlighted as a pioneer state with an efficient fiscal bureaucracy to finance military expansion. In later contexts, Sweden's representative institutions have been an example of participatory or even proto-democratic forms of government.

However, the two characteristics have rarely been compared in order to explain similarities and differences, or why one form of government gave way to another. Taking a holistic approach to the period 1538–1810, the authors explore the forces that drove this development and describe the long-term effects of the recurrent ruptures on state capacity and political participation.

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