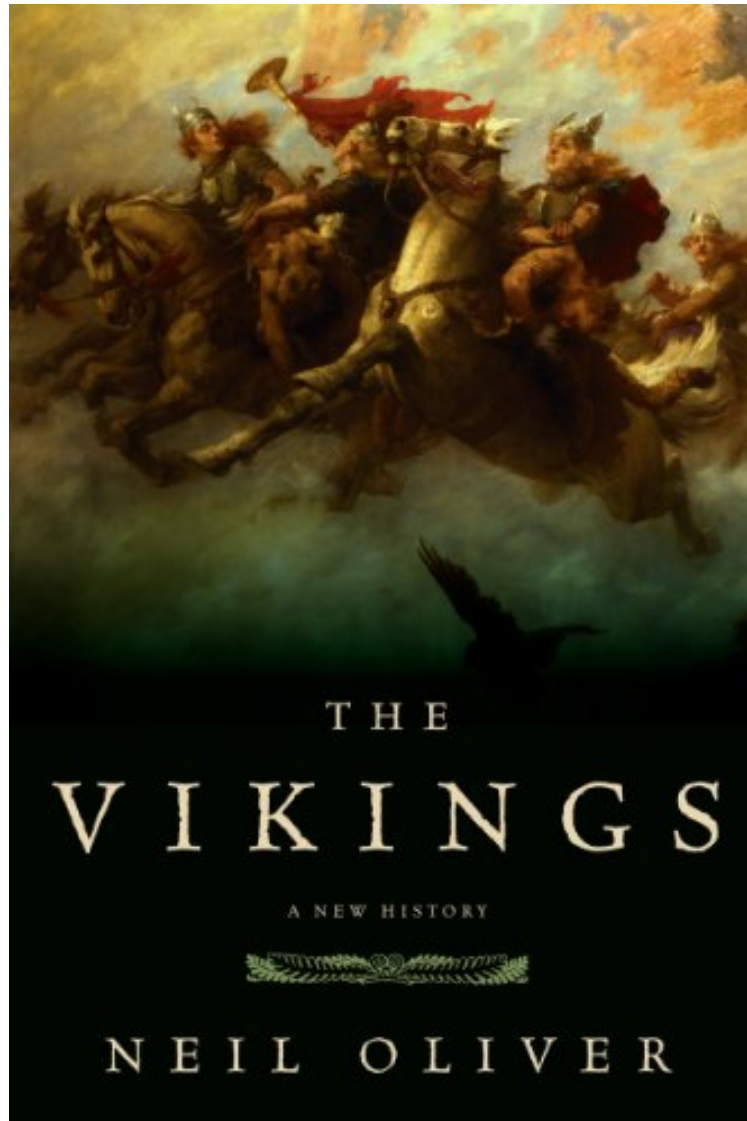


[Mobile book] The Vikings: A New History

## The Vikings: A New History

*Neil Oliver*

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**Neil Oliver : The Vikings: A New History** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Vikings: A New History:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting saga By Philip Wilson An enlightening trip from prehistory through the thirteenth century of a fascinating people. 65 of 67 people found the following review helpful. wordy lacking By C. P. Anderson I'm guessing this might be the kind of history book for people who don't like history. Instead of analysis, theories, and even just plain facts and narrative, what you get instead is lots of purple prose, lots of details about places the author visits, lots of very high-level flights of fancy, lots of repeated information, lots of stuff

that's not even related to the topic. Just to give you an idea, here's how one chapter begins: "The little Swedish island of Faro lies just off the northern tip of Gotland, like a raft that has slipped its mooring. Even mainland Swedes tend to misinterpret the name 'Faro' - hearing in it their word 'far,' meaning 'sheep.' Since 'o' means island, they tend to assume the place is called the 'island of the sheep' - and given the number of sheep there, it is an easy mistake to make. On Faro, however, there is a distinct dialect of the Swedish tongue, called Modern Gutnish, which has been spoken in some of the islands since at least the medieval period. Modern Gutnish is derived, as might be expected, from Old Gutnish, another branch of the Old Norse language. For Gutnish speakers on Faro (and they are few and far between now, among a total population of fewer than 600 souls) the word for sheep is 'lamm.' On Faro 'far' has connotations of distance travelled, the journey, and so the name is better understood as either 'the travelers' island' or, even more precisely, 'the island that must be travelled to.' Since it lies marooned off the coast of an island off the coast of Sweden, it seems like a suitable name." And all this to introduce a trip the author takes to Faro to look at some early pictographs of long boats - but not before another several pages featuring similar diversions devoted to Ingmar Bergman (who lived on the island) and a detailed description of the landscape and walk to the pictograph. It all ends with this rather purple bit: "There was something magical in the air around that plain of bedrock trapped beneath its protective shield of ice. The sun was gone, replaced by a bright silver disc of gibbous moon that turned the crust from clear to white. How many sunsets and moonrises had cast their light and shade across that ship carving since its maker walked away from it all those thousands of years before? We see it now just as they saw it then." As they used to say in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, "get on with it!" A very odd effort, but probably not all that unusual when you realize it's coming from a television personality. There's a lot better stuff out there I'm sure. 0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. for *Viking-phil*! By Mary A very easy to read and interesting look into the Viking Heritage. This book helps put a human face to the marauding, raping and pillaging Vikings.

An archaeologist goes beyond the Vikings bloody reputation to search for the truth, in a new and groundbreaking history. The Vikings famously took no prisoners, relished cruel retribution, and prided themselves on their bloodthirsty skills as warriors. But their prowess in battle is only a small part of their story, which stretches from their Scandinavian origins to America in the West and as far as Baghdad in the East. As the Vikings did not write their own history, we have to discover it for ourselves; and that discovery, as Neil Oliver reveals, tells an extraordinary story of a people who, from the brink of destruction, reached a quarter of the way around the globe and built an empire that lasted nearly two hundred years. Drawing on discoveries that have only recently come to light, Scottish archaeologist Neil Oliver goes on the trail of the real Vikings. Where did they emerge from? How did they really live? And just what drove them to embark on such extraordinary voyages of discovery over a thousand years ago? *The Vikings: A New History* explores many of those questions for the first time in an epic story of one of the world's great empires of conquest. 16 pages of color and BW photographs

From Publishers Weekly Inextricably tied up with the history of others Romans, Britons, Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Picts, Gauls, and Gael the Vikings have long been portrayed through their contemporaries' eyes. Not the scholarly type, the Vikings left only scant runes as their written record. Scottish archaeologist and historian Oliver takes clues from their contemporaries, burial remnants, and other cultural activities to tell their story. Instead of assuming the perspectives of the terrified writer of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, or Alcuin, or the Venerable Bede, or Tacitus, he takes the opposite point of view. And though one might question the objectivity of an author so clearly enamored with his subject, the result is a fascinating tale of explorers, chieftains, warlords, and a resourceful, stalwart people of immense seafaring prowess. Beginning before the sacking of Lindisfarne in C.E. 793, Oliver details their exploits from Kiev to Newfoundland, and the startling way they may have affected the Battle of Hastings in 1066 thereby changing the course of history all of which makes for riveting reading. Though the book's organization is somewhat choppy, anyone interested in finding out more about these real-life raiders will enjoy everything Oliver reveals. Agents: Eugenie Furness, Furness-Lawton (UK); Sophie Laurimore, Factual Management (UK). (Oct) Anyone interested in finding out more about these real-life raiders will enjoy everything Oliver reveals. - Publishers Weekly Scottish archaeologist Oliver explores the vast influence of the relatively short Viking Age. The author has studied his sources in depth and provides a great chronicle of these nation-shapers who stretched the limits of the known world. - Kirkus s About the Author Neil Oliver is a Scottish archaeologist, historian, broadcaster, and writer. He is perhaps best known as the charismatic presenter of the award-winning documentary series *Coast*, as well as his two critically acclaimed landmark BBC history series, *A History of Scotland* and *A History of Ancient Britain*. He lives in Scotland.