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**EXPANSION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SWEDEN IN THE HISTORY OF
EUROPE FROM 16TH TO 18TH CENTURY**

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ABSTRACT

This work presents Sweden and its route from a country subject to Denmark through a Baltic power which the entire Europe had to reckon with up to destroyed by wars and internal instability shadow of its former glory.

The work presents events from the history of this nation which led to the rise of the European power whose sovereigns wanted to make the Baltic their internal sea, so called dominium Maris Baltici. Here chosen historical figures have been shown: Swedish kings, leaders and politicians, many bright and ambitious people leading their Swedish motherland to countless victories, as well as incompetent and incapable men who wasted opportunities provided by their predecessors.

The process of creating Swedish military power is shown as well as an attempt to analyze the fall of the Swedish empire, which was a sudden, unexpected event surprising everyone living on the old Continent in those times.

This work is based on scientific studies: D. Carpanetto and others (red.), *Historia powszechna Tom 12 and 13.*, Novara 2007, M. Markiewicz (red.), *Historia Polski 1492 - 1795*, Cracow 2002., Z. Wójcik (red.), *Historia powszechna XVI-XVII wieku*, Warsaw 1999.

Key words: *dominium Maris Baltici, Livonian Wars, The Thirty Years' War, expansion.*

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