

CHAPTER 10

SCANDINAVIA

10.1 SWEDEN IN THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR

King Gustavus Adolphus drove the Imperial forces from Pomerania in 1630. Swedish troops occupied all of Bohemia, organized a new Protestant Union, and invaded Bavaria. Gustavus Adolphus was killed in 1632 in the Battle of Lutzen.

In the fall of 1634, Imperial forces decisively defeated the Swedish army at Nordlingen. The Treaty of Prague (1635) restored Catholic and Protestant lands to their status as of 1627.

Catholic France allied with Protestant Sweden against the Hapsburg Empire during the last phase of the war from 1635 – 1648. Sweden acquired western Pomerania as part of the Peace of Westphalia (1648), ending the Thirty Years' War.

10.2 SWEDISH EMPIRE

The high point of Swedish power in the Baltics was in the 1650's. Population of the Swedish Empire including the Ger-

man provinces was only three million, half of whom were Swedish.

Sweden was not a large or productive country. Maintaining a strong standing army proved to be too much of a strain on the economy. Sweden sought to control the trade of the Baltic Sea with its important naval stores, but even at the height of Swedish power only 10% of the ships in the Baltic trade were Swedish; 65% were Dutch.

Swedish provinces in the Baltic and in Germany were impossible to defend against a strong continental power such as Russia, Prussia, or Austria.

10.3 POLITICAL SITUATION

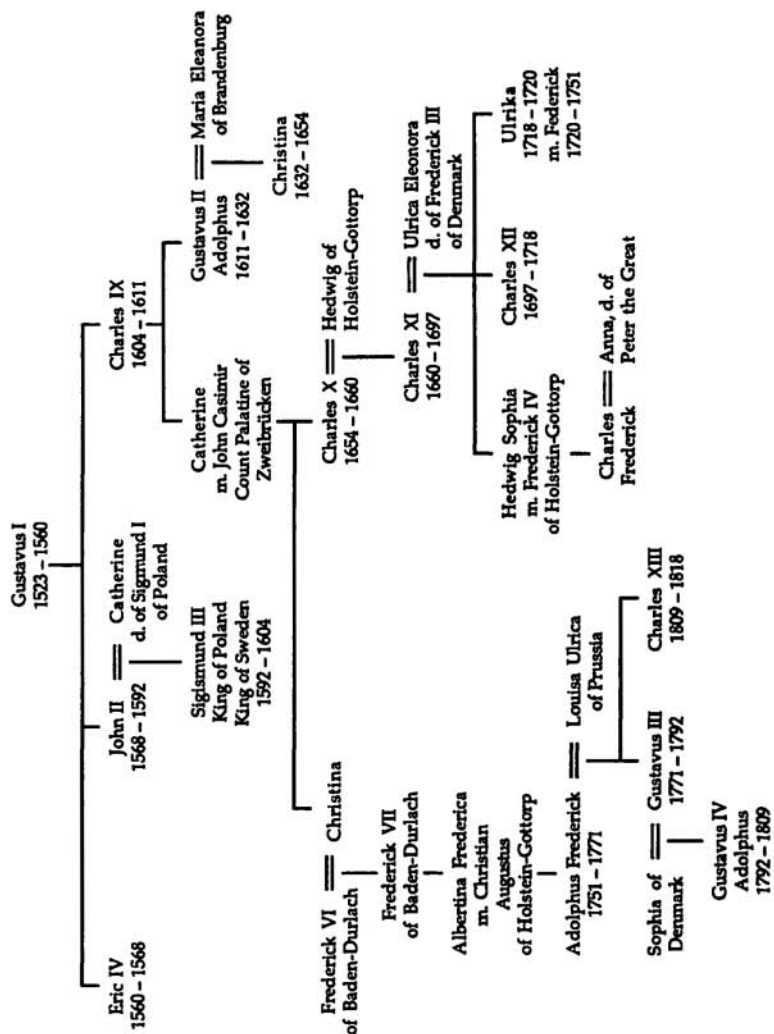
After the death of Gustavus Adolphus in 1632, the government was effectively controlled by an oligarchy of the nobility ruling in the name of the Vasa dynasty.

Christina, the daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, became queen at six years of age and ruled from 1632 to 54. At age twenty-eight, she abdicated the throne to her cousin and devoted the rest of her life to the Catholic religion and art.

Charles X Gustavus reigned from 1654 to 60 during the First Northern War against Poland, Russia, and Denmark.

Poland ceded Livonia to Sweden by the *Treaty of Olivia* (1660). Denmark surrendered to Sweden the southern part of the Scandinavian Peninsula by the *Treaty of Copenhagen* (1660).

Charles XI (1660 – 97) became king at age eleven. When he came of age, he spent the rest of his life attempting to regain



THE HOUSE OF VASA (1523 - 1818)

powers lost to the Council. For this he secured the aid of the Lower Estates of the Riksdag who in 1693 declared that Charles XI was "absolute sovereign King, responsible to no one on earth, but with power and might as his command to rule and govern the realm as a Christian monarch." This was in dramatic contrast to the centuries' long struggles in Holland and England to constitutionally limit their kings.

King Charles XII (1697 – 1718) came to the throne at age 15 and reigned for twenty-one years. He spent most of his life at war and was an outstanding military leader in the Great Northern War (1700 – 1721).

Denmark, Saxony, Poland, and Russia formed an alliance to destroy the Swedish Empire. In February, 1700, Poland attacked Swedish Livonia and Denmark invaded Holstein. The Swedish navy defeated the Danes and attacked Copenhagen, forcing Denmark to make peace.

Charles then shifted his attention to Estonia and routed a Russian invasion in the Battle of Narva, inflicting heavy losses. Charles was then eighteen years of age.

The next several years were spent fighting in Poland, defeating both Poles and Russians, but in 1709 the Russians, outnumbering the Swedish forces two-to-one, defeated them. Peter the Great then took the Baltic provinces of Livonia and Estonia from Sweden.

Years of warfare, poor government, and high taxes finally led to Charles XII's alienation from his people. In 1718 he was killed by a stray bullet.

10.4 EIGHTEENTH CENTURY SWEDEN

The loss of the Empire meant a move to a more democratic, limited monarchy and the new freedom led to a sharp increase

in peasant enterprises and independence. The Swedish economy prospered.

By 1756 parliament considered itself the sovereign Estates of the realm and many civil liberties were established. Principal decisions of government were made by the Riskdag (Parliament).

Under Gustavus III there was a temporary return to royal absolutism until he was assassinated in 1792.

10.5 SCANDINAVIAN RELATIONSHIPS

Finland was part of the Swedish Empire in the seventeenth century and Norway was part of Denmark. In the early nineteenth century Sweden gave up Finland but acquired Norway as an autonomous part of a union of the two nations.

10.6 DENMARK

Frederick III (1648 – 70), established himself as absolute ruler.

Frederick IV (1699 – 1730) fought in the Northern War and achieved a rough parity in the Baltic with Sweden, but accepted Swedish control of the south of the Scandinavian Peninsula.

Christian VII experimented with both enlightened despotism and reforms allowing more civil liberties and economic freedoms to the Danish people.