

## **DESCRIPTION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

During the eighteenth century the European political scene was dominated by the imperialist competition among Great Britain, France and Spain, which took a new course due to the greater development of Royal Navies. This rivalry for the dominion over the World influenced and stimulated the technological, economic and military progress, but, at the same time, this phenomena provoked a high demand of natural resources (precious metals and raw materials, especially timber) to maintain the operational needs of Royal Navies.

The purpose of this research project is to show the importance of forest resources coming from two strategic regions: the Southern Baltic (today the territories of Poland, Germany, Russia, and Lithuania) and the Viceroyalty of New Spain (today Mexico and Cuba), whose abundant forests were the principal source of wood, pitch, hemp, flax, and tar, that is, basic products used for building vessels and for keeping them in operation.

In order to gather the necessary analytical data I will carry out archival and library queries in Poland, Spain, Mexico, and Cuba. Subsequently, I will compare the collected material with the existing literature on this subject. An import stage within the framework of this project consists of processing these data. It will involve the creation of the database adjusted to the type of material collected in the archives, as well as the use of Geographic Information System (GIS). Thanks to these tools it will be possible to define the exact areas from which the timber was extracted, to determine the volume and value of forest resources extracted from the Southern Baltic and New Spain, to trace commercial networks in Europe and America and link them to the contractors, and to reconstruct the global maritime routes used for the trade of forest resources between the Old and New World.

The proposed research will help us to understand the concept of globalization, which will be explained through the studies of commerce across different areas of the Atlantic world and, particularly, those which connected the Iberian Peninsula with the northern Europe and part of the North America and the Caribbean. On the other hand, the analysis of the extraction of natural resources attracts the attention to the fact that deforestation of different regions was strictly associated with the imperial struggle for the World domination in which the military and naval industries demanded huge quantities of forestry raw materials to satisfy the ambitions of the main European powers.