



Perspectives in Economic and Social History

SHADOW ECONOMIES IN THE GLOBALISING WORLD

SMUGGLING IN SCANDINAVIA, 1766–1806

Anna Knutsson



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From West Indian sugar and bottles of Southeast Asian arrack to French red wines, English felt cloth, and Mediterranean lemons, many global wares ended up in the Scandinavian borderlands during the late eighteenth century. This book explores how and why these goods came to be there and analyses what smuggling can reveal about the emergence of global trade, the formation of the nation state, and the development of consumer society in Europe's northernmost outskirts.

This book shows that the global underground was ubiquitous in the Nordic countries and fundamentally altered them, politically, economically, socially, and culturally. Through re-evaluating the role of smuggling the book complements and challenges established historical accounts about state building, market dynamics, consumer culture, and ideas and identity. It also offers a roadmap for how to think about illegal global trade and how to approach this notoriously difficult research field. By integrating illegality, the book aims to show how an illicit web entangled often overlooked 'peripheral' territories with traditional 'portals of globalisation' and proposes a novel take on early modern globalisation and the paths to modernity in the European hinterlands. To achieve this a wide variety of sources are used including court records, administrative sources, diaries, ambassadorial correspondence, and maps in various languages including Swedish, Finnish, Norwegian, English, and French.

This book makes a significant contribution to the literature on economic history, the first wave of globalisation, the study of shadow economies, and Scandinavian history more broadly.

Anna Knutsson graduated with a PhD in history at the European University Institute in 2019 after writing a thesis about smuggling in Sweden during the eighteenth century. Since then, she has taken up an international postdoctoral fellowship at Uppsala University, Cambridge University, and NTNU and is currently researching illegal trade and its impact on northern European peripheries.

'This innovative book reconceives smuggling not just as a national phenomenon but as both global and globalizing. At the same time, it shows how smugglers and smuggled commodities – such as coffee – profoundly influenced Nordic culture, politics, cultural mores, and even foreign policy.'

Margaret R. Hunt, *Professor of History, Uppsala University*

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First published 2023
by Routledge
4 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Knutsson, Anna, author.

Title: Shadow economies in the globalising world : smuggling in Scandinavia, 1766–1806 / Anna Knutsson.

Description: New York, NY : Routledge, 2023. |

Series: Perspectives in economic and social history |

Includes bibliographical references and index. |

Identifiers: LCCN 2022034017 | ISBN 9781032127408 (hardback) |

ISBN 9781032127439 (paperback) | ISBN 9781003226031 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Informal sector (Economics)—Scandinavia—History—18th century.

Classification: LCC HD2346.S29 K69 2023 | DDC 338.720948—dc23/eng/20220812

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022034017>

ISBN: 978-1-032-12740-8 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-032-12743-9 (pbk)

ISBN: 978-1-003-22603-1 (ebk)

DOI: 10.4324/9781003226031

Typeset in Bembo

by codeMantra

To my daughter Alva.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication is a revised version of a European University Institute PhD thesis, and I first want to thank the EUI and my supervisor Luca Molá for bestowing me with the freedom to develop my project freely and having faith in me to see it through. I also want to thank those who helped to make this book a reality most importantly, my editor Andy Humphries, the series editors Andrew August and Jari Eloranta, as well as the Swedish Research Council that funded both my doctoral research and the project that allowed me to transform it into a publishable book. Thank you to all the various reviewers, known and unknown, who have shared their knowledge as well as expertise with me and helped to form this project. Your help has enabled me to put together the jigsaw pieces of this research.

To Berit Eldvik for sharing her knowledge of peasant textiles with me. To Anna-Karin Jobs Arnberg for enthusiastic conversations about worsteds. To Michael Nix for his insights into the Norwich worsted manufacturing. To Ulf Åsén for his insider knowledge of the Freemasons in Stockholm. A special thank you to the people working at Riksarkivet in Stockholm who have been very helpful in assisting me with finding all the documents I have asked them for. My warmest thank you to Hanna Hodacs, who played a central role in realising this research project and without whom there would be no book in your hands. And a special thank you to Margaret Hunt who painstakingly helped me perfect the manuscript.

Thank you to all the people who have assisted me with languages and translation. To Charlotte Bellamy, who I could always turn to for help with my French material, it has been a pleasure working with you. To Mikko Toivanen, without whom there would be no Finnish language sources in this book. To Yann Peresse, for his struggles with eighteenth-century trade manual German.

Finally, thank you to my family and friends who have seen me through this process in one piece. To Chloe Scott, who kept checking that I was alive, sent

xiv Acknowledgements

me both dog photos and encouragement throughout the years, and answered more than her fair share of English language questions. To Kirsty Alexander, who pushed me to both insert more commas into the book and more exercise into my day, for standing by me in this process and sharing all my ups and downs during TWs and English language Question Time. To my parents, Björn and Kerstin Knutsson, who since my childhood have supported my schoolwork and have pushed me to pursue higher academic degrees with an unwavering faith in my abilities, and who oversaw two final write-ups under their roof, providing food, shelter, and peace. Finally, thank you to Andreas who, with the greatest degree of patience, has supported my work, had faith in me, pushed me to go further, and helped out with our daughter when I needed some sacred writing time. Thank you for being my sparring partner in work and life, metaphorically as well as literally.

1

INTRODUCTION

It was late in the evening of 23 December 1805 and the Swedish customs officer Hallenborg had been trudging through the snowy forest north of Charlottenberg for hours when he suddenly saw something moving through the darkness. Hallenborg had been patrolling the border between Sweden and Norway for days after receiving an anonymous tip-off. As Hallenborg and his colleagues drew closer to the moving object, they discerned that there were in fact two: a pair of horse-drawn sleighs were making their way through the boreal forest in the midwinter darkness. The customs officers managed to halt the sleighs and found that they were driven by two peasants, Erik Jönsson and Olof Persson. From the sleighs brimming with goods, the customs officers retrieved packing cases stocked with West Indian sugar; bottles of Southeast Asian arrack; red wines presumably from France; English felt; a basket of porcelain; and a dozen Mediterranean lemons.¹

The diverse richness of the goods seized from the two smuggling peasants reflects the variety and reach of global trade. It also reflects a demand for various foreign goods: manufactured European wares as well as extra-European, exotic products. In response to the arrival of such goods, the Swedish state issued increasingly strict protectionist legislation intended to shut them out of the market. Customs officers, tasked with enforcing this legislation on the ground, came to play a crucial role in the consolidation and economic homogenisation of the early modern state. Yet, despite the state's attempts to enforce uniform economic policy throughout its territory, globally sourced goods continued to find their way in, spurred on by persistent consumer demand. This book, covering the 40-year period 1766–1806, investigates both how smuggling functioned in practice and how it was perceived by a wide range of social actors in contemporary society.

Global Flows and Frictions

In 2014, Michael Kwass published an influential study of the early modern global underground which led to the emergence of a new scholarship on smuggling. This new research, which is discussed at further length below, takes a broad view on smuggling and posits that it was an intricate part of early modern society rather than a fringe phenomenon. Kwass identified the cause of smuggling in the eighteenth century as a convergence of three historical processes: globalisation, state formation, and the consumer revolution.² These three factors constitute the point of departure in this book and provide a framework for the individual chapters and the main conclusions drawn from the study.

Most scholars agree that the eighteenth century saw an increased flow of consumer goods all around the globe, a process that had a significant impact on the consumer markets in Europe.³ This global trade stemmed, at least in part, from the intensifying commercial competition between European states.⁴ Recent research on smuggling has revealed that global wares also came to spread through illegal channels, and into states previously thought of as ‘immune’ to their impact, shielded behind national walls of protectionist legislation.⁵ How these illegal channels of globalisation worked depended on the state in question, its legal, geographical, social, and cultural conditions, as well as to some extent its relationship with other states. Trade regulations and smuggling were consequently matters of international interest. The character and impact of globalisation was far from uniform, and as Kenneth Pomeranz and Steven Topik have argued, the process of globalisation should be understood as a dynamic interaction between global and local levels.⁶ This was particularly true when it came to illegal transfers of global wares, since this trade was normally organised locally rather than nationally.

The interaction between the global and the local is at the centre of recent approaches to transnational history, which turn the historian’s perspective towards the study of connections, circulations, entanglements, interactions, and transfers across borders.⁷ Some scholars have pointed out that transnational histories can benefit from ‘playing with scales’, *jeux d’échelles*, moving between the micro-, meso-, and macro-levels in order to explore transnational actors and the various local and global conditions that affected them.⁸ A study of smuggling through the lens of such *jeux d’échelles* could thus include a consideration of transgressive actors, local social conditions, state regulations, and global trade flows. Pierre-Yves Saunier has pointed out that by focusing on the mechanics of circulations and connections, it is possible to observe the unevenness of transnational phenomena and the various levels – local, national, international – conditioning them. This offers historians a way to historicise globalisation and to shed light on its complexities.⁹ The study of smuggling, by definition a transnational, border-crossing activity, is a particularly suitable field for investigating the historical processes of globalisation.

Adopting a transnational perspective does not necessarily mean moving away from the state as a unit of analysis, but rather admits the existence of other

influences, forces, and movements. A number of historians have thus argued that a history of transnational forces should be used as an accompaniment to national narratives, not as an alternative.¹⁰ It could be argued that due to its strong connection to the concept of nation, the category of transnational history is unsuited to the period before the emergence of the nation state. However, some historians have pointed to the insights that can be gained by adopting a transnational perspective on pre-modern 'nations' or states.¹¹ Focusing on the transnational and border-crossing activity of smuggling allows for a study of the struggles of the developing state in an international context. As the state tried to consolidate its power and control its territory, the regulation of smuggling became an increasing concern. An examination of the responses to smuggling thus permits a study of the state's attempts to consolidate control over its territory and can offer intriguing insights into state capacity.¹² Smuggling is therefore not merely a transnational story of circulations but also, as Kwass has highlighted, a national story about the consolidation of the state and the enforcement of state authority by blocking the circulation of goods.¹³

The final historical process highlighted by Kwass, the consumer revolution, has been problematised since the term was coined in the seminal work *The Birth of a Consumer Society* in 1982.¹⁴ Following its publication, there has been a race to locate this 'birth' in various corners of Europe and in various time periods.¹⁵ Many scholars locate it in the eighteenth century, although some historians have recently questioned whether there actually was an increase in consumption in this period.¹⁶ Both the terms consumer revolution and consumer society are potentially problematic in their presupposition that consumption was increasing due to an expansion of disposable income. While growing consumption may have increased the impetus for smuggling, the main precondition was a *continuing* rather than an *expanding* demand for foreign goods that persisted despite prohibitions. The study of smuggling allows for an exploration of the social meaning and significance of contraband consumption by looking at the interplay between consumer culture, consumers, and contraband. Such an investigation can reveal how global wares were received, appropriated, and put to use. As explored in the historical literature on cultural transfers, objects moving across national and, more importantly, cultural borders came to be reinterpreted – re-semantised – by new agents in new contexts.¹⁷

The Swedish Situation

Globalisation and the impact of 'the global' on Sweden in the eighteenth century has so far only received limited attention. However, the work that has been done has suggested that Sweden was part of the global fabric, influencing and being influenced by global processes that also affected large parts of Europe in the eighteenth century.¹⁸ Indeed, Leos Müller has argued that the eighteenth century was Sweden's first global century.¹⁹ Such an understanding stands in stark contrast to research which has argued that Sweden in the eighteenth century became

4 Introduction

an inward-gazing, protectionist, and isolationist state that withdrew from the international stage as it struggled to regain control of the country following the end of the Age of Greatness (1611–1718).²⁰ A general conclusion in this book is that these two perspectives on the Swedish eighteenth century are not contradictory, but rather that they are different consequences of the same phenomenon: globalisation. Indeed, the progress of globalisation had a range of effects, some of which contradicted one another. Recent international research on smuggling has shed light on these processes as it takes a broad approach to the phenomenon by combining various perspectives.²¹ This new scholarship stands in sharp contrast to previous studies, which can be considered as being divided into three largely separate strands: the economy of smuggling, smuggling as a social crime, and smuggling as a cultural occurrence.²² So far, there has been a dearth of academic scholarship that engages with this new approach to smuggling in both Sweden and Scandinavia more generally.²³

Addressing a largely overlooked area of Scandinavian history, the aim of this book is to investigate what the smuggling perspective can add to our understanding of three key processes in late eighteenth-century Sweden, namely globalisation, state formation, and consumption. The book draws on a wide range of research and interacts with several fields of historical enquiry as the history of smuggling, just like economic history at large, is tightly interlinked with several other historical fields of enquiry: history of ideas and politics, territoriality, social and cultural history, and international relations. Drawing on earlier scholarship, five dimensions of smuggling have been identified as particularly worthy of further investigation: economic legislation; limits of state control; illegal retailing; circulating objects; inter-state competition.

The new scholarship on smuggling has stressed that in order to understand smuggling it is crucial to start with the state and the economic legislation it issued.²⁴ Economic legislation was intended to tackle changing economic conditions by allowing state control mechanisms to influence, stop, or condition trade into the state's economic space. The issuing of economic legislation was thus a way for the state to claim control over its territory and its economic integrity. This legislation reflects the state's objectives, and can be used to study state interests, which changed over time due to altering priorities or conflicts of interest.²⁵ The eighteenth century, or more specifically the period 1650–1780, has sometimes in the historiography of early modern Europe been referred to as 'The Age of Mercantilism'.²⁶ While the definition of mercantilism as a coherent ideology has been criticised repeatedly during the last 50 years, recent scholarship has suggested that, rather than discarding mercantilism completely, it should be 'reimagined', and opened up for new interpretations.²⁷ Mercantilism has consequently been reconsidered as part of a wider political, scientific, and societal context, and the notion itself has been deconstructed and considered in its constituent parts.²⁸ If we are to understand smuggling, and the state's attempts to suppress it, it is then necessary to dig deeper into why specific protectionist legislation was adopted, and how the offenders were treated, rather than to simply tar all states' legislation

with the same brush and presume that it had the same goals and consequences. Meanwhile, the reactions to the legislations also provide an excellent starting point if we want to explore how legislation was perceived, and more specifically how the population viewed and related to smuggling. State legislation, just like other historical phenomena, did not exist in a vacuum but provides insights into how debates changed over time influenced by changing forms of government and ideological patterns. It is therefore a great starting point for the study of smuggling, as it provides crucial insights into how the crime of smuggling was constructed, and how this might have changed over time.

This legislation also had to be enforced on the ground and recent research on smuggling has revealed a great discrepancy between official regulation and lived reality. The limits of state authority have been observed in two different, but interlinked ways: the limits of territorial control and the limits of control over inhabitants and other actors moving in and out of the country.²⁹ Smuggling research has shown that the state's control over its territories was conditioned by pre-existing traditional, social, and cultural ties and conditions along the borders.³⁰ The customs officers set to work in these locations had to contend with the local conditions, but often also had their own interests and agendas which affected how they could, and chose to, conduct their duties.³¹ Anne Montenach has furthermore highlighted the importance of considering the physical dimensions of maintaining a border, pointing out the need to focus on the geography and physical layout of the border regions, something also stressed in E. R. H. Tesdahl's work.³² Considering the geographical dimensions of trade is, of course nothing new, but formed an integral part of the work of Fernand Braudel.³³ Surprisingly however, this is a dimension that has been largely overlooked in studies of illegal trade, despite its crucial role in shaping illegal trade and the attempts to quench it. Moreover, short term climatic factors such as reduced harvests and outstanding fish yields undoubtedly also played an important role in motivating individuals to turn to smuggling in times when regular sources of income were wanting, thus playing a part in the makeshift economy of the poor. Indeed, as smuggling became a tool to use in challenging situations several scholars have referred to the 'moral economy of smuggling', drawing on E. P. Thompson's 'moral economy'.³⁴ Such popular conceptions of smuggling stand alongside official views and can help us understand how smuggling was viewed and treated in practice, both by the perpetrators and the customs officers. Meanwhile, the continued border-crossing activities also challenged state authority and affected its ability to create a uniform national economic unit.

Once the contraband had entered the country the next step was how it reached the consumers. Scholars of eighteenth-century retailing have stressed the need to consider the plurality of retailing channels that co-existed during this period. They included old forms of vending, like fairs, markets, and peddling, but also new ones like shops and postal order.³⁵ The multiplicity of retailing outlets, both older and newer, has also been observed in studies of smuggling. By focusing on the retailer, scholars have shown that a range of different vendors traded in

contraband, often in addition to legal goods.³⁶ What Kwass defined as parallel economies of legal and illegal wares were thus brought together in the mercer's shop and the pedlar's sack.³⁷ While contraband was traded by a vast range of retailers serving different clienteles, the conditions under which they conducted trade varied considerably. Some were protected by particular patronages while others, like pedlars and women, were continually pursued by the authorities.³⁸ Meanwhile, contraband retailing could also play a crucial role for exposed groups as their legal options often were extremely limited.³⁹ In this way, smuggling became an important survival tool for groups discriminated against by the official legislation. While there were significant differences between the retailers, what united all successful contraband vendors was the support of their clients. Montenach has argued that the desirability of the goods shaped popular perceptions of the retailers, and that the consumers played a crucial role in shielding the traders from the authorities so that they could continue dealing in contraband.⁴⁰ Understanding the contraband retailers and their clients can therefore give crucial insights not only into the dispersion of illegal wares but also into the state's attempts to control illegal trade and the social support of smuggling and its enablers.

To understand contraband, why it was prohibited, why it was desired, and the effects it had on culture, politics, and society, it is inevitably also necessary to look closer at the things being smuggled. Objects were far from static but were reinterpreted and redefined throughout their 'lives'. However, their materiality remained fairly fixed although they could be marked by age, usage, and incidents.⁴¹ Frank Trentmann has stressed that this materiality was central in deciding what objects actually *did*: coffee was enlivening, gin intoxicating, silk cooling and shimmering, while cotton was washable and printable.⁴² Objects were then not merely 'bundles of meaning', but had crucial inherent qualities which defined them. The state's acceptance or rejection of foreign wares was, in general, also based on the nature of the good in question and whether the state deemed a specific item to be a threat. Meanwhile, the nature of a good also helps to explain not just why it was banned but also why it remained in demand. Studies of contraband have therefore tended to focus on one or a couple types of contraband in one general geographic area.⁴³ Anne Montenach has, for example, stressed that the French demand for banned Asian calico was related to its durability and the fact that it was easy to wash.⁴⁴ Similarly, William Farrell has noted that the demand for French silk in Britain was connected to the desirability of its "material qualities".⁴⁵ Certainly, many of these objects also became fashionable, but the fashionable aspect was often interconnected with the materiality of the wares. By focusing on the materiality and the life of specific types of contraband, scholars have been able to ask pointed questions about what role contraband played in culture, politics, and the economy. This has shed crucial light on why specific goods were banned, why a demand persisted, and how specific types of contraband were adopted and adapted in various social and cultural contexts. As Igor Kopytoffs observed, "what is significant about the adoption of alien objects – as of alien ideas – is not the fact that they are adopted, but the way that they are culturally redefined and put to use".⁴⁶

Finally, research has shown that smuggling could also represent a form of inter-state competition, particularly during wartime. Smuggling as a form of inter-state competition is not a new notion. Already back in 1918, in his study of the Napoleonic continental system, the Swedish economic historian Eli Heckscher argued that smuggling played an important role in negating the effects of trade blockades.⁴⁷ More recent scholarship has similarly argued that states used smuggling strategically to undermine foreign trade barriers during times of war.⁴⁸ Such trade barriers, however, also existed during peacetime, in the shape of protectionist legislation intended to position countries against their trade competitors. Still, the relationship between state and smuggling in peacetime has received considerably less attention in the research literature.⁴⁹ Indeed, the new scholarship on smuggling has shown only a limited interest for smuggling as inter-state competition, which is a notable omission as it creates an artificial divide between the state's domestic protectionist goals and the competitive globalism from which these goals emerged. How international smuggling was viewed in different states naturally depended on the information state authorities received. This information was supplied by state actors, primarily ambassadors and consuls, which have been shown to have had complex allegiances that affected the information they chose to convey.⁵⁰ While state discussions surrounding international smuggling can offer intriguing insight into the state's international concerns and ambitions, they were also shaped by the individuals on the ground who provided information on international trade, prompting questions about who these individuals were, as well as their concerns, interests, and allegiances.

These five dimensions of the phenomenon of smuggling in late eighteenth-century Sweden help structure the study's Chapters 2–6. In turn, the chapters address views on economic state legislation; the extent of a state's authority over its territory; what smuggling meant for the culprits; attitudes towards contraband retailers, contraband and its effects on society; and international perceptions of smuggling and inter-state competition. While each individual approach listed above cannot cover all three of these processes of globalisation, state formation, and consumption, they can, taken together, offer insights into all of them. At the end of the study, in Chapter 7, I will therefore revisit the three processes and discuss why it is crucial to incorporate illegality into our historical analyses.

Shape and Scope

The timeframe chosen for this study, 1766–1806, is based both on external and internal events which affected the Swedish state's relationship to global trade. The investigation starts after the end of the Seven Years' War (1756–1763) and thus covers a period Sophus Reinert has identified as an era of intensifying international trade competition for many European states.⁵¹ In Sweden more specifically, the late 1760s was also a period marked by economic crisis. As part of the Crown's attempt to handle the crisis it introduced a new anti-smuggling and sumptuary decrees. The study reaches its end just before the introduction of the Continental Blockade in 1806, an event which in the short term critically

changed how smuggling was conducted in Sweden, as it drew Scandinavia into the Napoleonic Wars,⁵² ultimately resulting in a repartitioning of territories and borders all over Northern Europe. The book's 40-year span allows for a rich study of the continuities and shifts in smuggling, over a period characterised by deep political, cultural, and intellectual change both in Europe and Scandinavia.

Chapter 2 looks at how smuggling was conceived as a crime in Sweden and the subsequent development of anti-smuggling legislation. It studies how the conception and treatment of the smuggler was challenged over time, particularly in the newspapers. The discussions illustrate that smuggling and its management were contested, in a public debate that became a battleground between proponents of diverging notions about rights and loyalties. These clashes were linked to changing legislation but also to the emergence of new ideas of rights and a strengthening of 'citizens' rights'.

Chapter 3 explores how the new anti-smuggling legislation was enforced in practice and investigates some of the challenges involved in the state's enactment of Sweden as a homogenous economic space. The chapter pays particular attention to the persistence of smuggling through a study of its actors, the influence of the landscapes and spaces of smuggling, and the varied practices of smuggling.

Chapter 4 delves into the issue of the retailer to explore how contraband was distributed to Swedish consumers across the realm. The chapter gives particular attention to the retailers' relationships both to each other and to the clients in order to analyse the social aspects of smuggling in urban life and in the countryside.

Chapter 5 explores why certain wares were banned and why prohibitions were unable to hamper the demand for these wares. In order to make such assessments, it is necessary to study single wares and specific consumer groups. The chapter thus focuses its analysis on two specific types of contraband: one skilled manufactured product (worsted) and one exotic raw material (coffee). The investigation considers why consumption of smuggled wares occurred and what social and cultural impact these goods had on the consumer market, including how the goods' illegal status affected their impact.

Chapter 6 shifts the focus away from the domestic perspective on smuggling to consider how Sweden's trading partners viewed smuggling in and out of the country. The chapter discusses two central trading partners in particular, Britain and France, both of which played a crucial role in the competitive globalism of the eighteenth century and remained in conflict, either armed or commercial, for the majority of the century. In this perspective of inter-state competition, the chapter pays attention to the role of transnational state actors tasked with reporting on trade and smuggling, allowing a closer study of them as agents operating across borders, with sometimes shifting personal and professional interests and allegiances.

Sources

Despite the numerous insights that can be gained from studying smuggling, it is also a topic which is notoriously difficult to research. This reputation is in part

related to smuggling's clandestine nature, but more specifically it is linked to the issues involved in quantifying smuggling and thus also in comparing it to official trade statistics. Smuggling research is therefore, as already noted, often unsuited for numerical studies of trade, and increases and decreases in consumption. Despite its reputation, there are many other ways to approach smuggling, and a creative foray into the archives reveals a host of sources that can throw light on this 'elusive' phenomenon. A crucial feature of smuggling research is, however, that the archival material available to scholars is almost exclusively derived from failed smuggling attempts; in a way, this book is therefore a history of recorded failures, which naturally conditions its analysis and conclusions.

The book draws on a vast range of sources, but there are two types of sources that deserve more in-depth attention at the outset, namely legislation and the customs court records. Legislation, in particular the anti-smuggling decrees, provides a spine to this book. Three key decrees were effective during the period 1769–1806 to control smuggling. The first was published under Adolph Friedrich in 1757 and provided the bare bones for the later decrees. In the decree it was argued that manufactured goods were produced in the kingdom to such a "complete greatness and beauty" that they must be protected from the dangers brought on by smuggling.⁵³ It further stipulated that the first time a person was caught smuggling, he or she would lose the goods and be fined half the value of their value, with all subsequent violations resulting in a fine equal to the total value of the goods. The confiscator would in turn receive 60% of the fine and the rest would fall to the state.⁵⁴ By 1770, the rules tightened, and a smuggling verdict resulted in the loss of the goods and a fine equal to value of the goods, with all later sentences doubling the fine, although for illegal imports of legal goods the fine was settled at a quarter of the price.⁵⁵ Under Gustav IV Adolph (1792–1800 [regency], 1800–1809), the regulations were yet again made more severe. In contrast to his grandfather Adolph Friedrich, the young King justified his measures by referring to the responsibilities of loyal subjects towards their fatherland, defining the *contrabandier* as a traitor to the country. The idea was not new, but rather emerged from longstanding discourses, as will be discussed further on. However, it appears to be the first time that this idea was spelled out in the legal framework. The 1799 decree instructed that the offender would lose the goods and pay a minimum fine of 50 Rdr – which was the equivalent of about a year's salary for a peasant – while for contraband worth more than 50 Rdr, the fine would mirror its full value. For second-time offenders, the minimum fine would be 100 Rdr.⁵⁶ These were the key components, although the decrees were continuously developed and debated during the period, as will be discussed in the forthcoming chapter. Further components of the decrees, and addendums to them, will also be discussed in connection to the various court cases that will be presented in the book. The anti-smuggling decrees should be considered together with the Import Regulations and the Sumptuary Laws, which were related to the anti-smuggling decrees. In the second half of the eighteenth century, Import Regulations were issued in 1757, 1771, 1776, 1782, 1794, and 1799, and

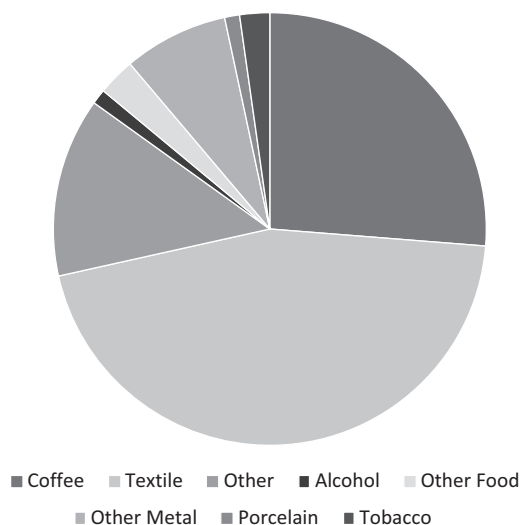
Sumptuary Laws appeared in 1766, 1770, and 1794. Sumptuary decrees for coffee specifically were also released in 1756, 1766, 1794, and 1799. A level of convergence can be seen between these various protectionist measures.

In addition, it should be noted that the two Swedish Navigation Acts, from 1724 and 1774, were also influencing the control of contraband.⁵⁷ These acts stipulated the captain's tasks and responsibilities and outlined when and where ships could stop and unload their cargoes. For the duration of the period in question, they were only allowed to load and unload international cargoes in staple towns.

The second main body of sources derives from the Customs Court (*Tullrätten*), an institution tasked with prosecuting smuggling crimes, which had both a maritime and an inland branch.⁵⁸ The Maritime Customs Courts (*Sjö tullsrätten*) were located in all the 33 staple towns in Sweden (two new towns were added in the 1780s: Umeå in 1781 and Kaskö in 1785), and they were responsible for resolving disputes regarding shipments and all cases involving the handling of illicit foreign goods. In addition to the maritime courts, there were Land Customs Offices located along the borders to Norway and Russia, which appear to have housed stand-alone courts. The survival of sources from these courts is patchy, and they are spread out in regional archives, although backup copies of some court records have been submitted to the National Board of Trade, the archive of which is housed at the National Archives (*Riksarkivet*) in Stockholm. A corresponding collection from the Finnish provinces is also kept at the Finnish National Archives (*Kansallisarkisto/Riksarkivet*) in Helsinki. These circumstances make it difficult to gain a precise idea about the extent to which Customs Court records have survived, and this book does not offer a systematic review of the material. Instead, I have selected material from specific locations and time periods that I have deemed representative. These records offer an insight into both the kind of wares which were being illegally imported, the actors who were caught smuggling and how they defended their actions, and what sort of punishments they received. Discussions relating to all of these aspects will reoccur throughout the book, although more detailed presentations of how the courts functioned and the appeal process worked will be offered in Chapter 3.

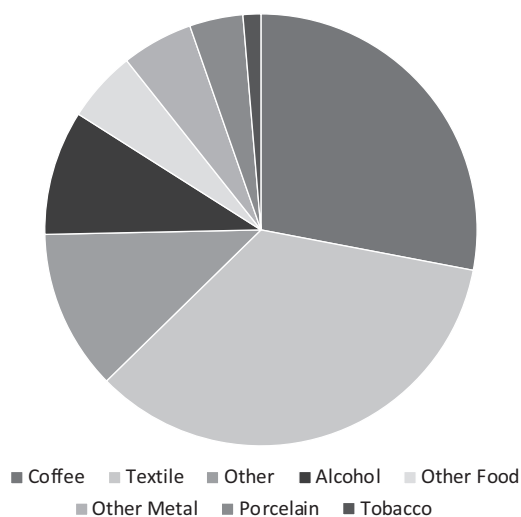
The Customs Court Records are also, in general, unsuitable for quantitative studies both due to the uneven recording of crimes (see discussion in Chapter 3) and due to discrepancies in the methods of recording contraband. A short survey of the seized contraband recorded in Stockholm Maritime Custom Court between June and December in 1769 and 1800 respectively will serve as an example of the limited use of a quantitative method in relation to smuggling. (Graphs 1.1 and 1.2).

The earlier contraband list from 1769 reveals a concentration on textiles, coffee, and various manufactured metal wares, such as shaving knives and buttons. In the later one these goods are still present but there are also more foodstuffs and a heavier presence of alcohol. However, the tables presented here only record the contraband goods as they occur *per mention* in the Court Records. As they do not record the value of each of the wares in a consistent manner, they can only give a rough idea of the make-up of contraband seizures.⁵⁹ Due to inconsistencies and



GRAPH 1.1 Contraband seized in June–December 1769 as recorded in the Stockholm Maritime Court Records.

Source: Stockholm City Archive, Stora Sjötulls Rättens Dombok, 1769, Stockholms rådhus-rätt, Stora Sjötullen, Protokoll, A, vol. 22.



GRAPH 1.2 Contraband seized in June–December 1800 as recorded in the Stockholm Maritime Court Records.

Source: Stockholm City Archive, Stora Sjötulls Rättens Dombok, 1800, Stockholms rådhus-rätt, Stora Sjötullen, Protokoll, A, vol. 23.

discrepancies in the recordings of contraband, more specific calculations based on price or quantity are difficult to make. However, as quantitative studies of contraband seizures can at best be indicative of trends, extensive studies of this price and quantity data can never be conclusive. The figures that will be discussed in this book should be approached with caution and quantitative discussions will play a subordinate role.

Terminology and Currency

One of the more difficult things to translate for this book were the names of the various institutions involved in the management of smuggling. Whereas some, like *Kommerskollegium*, The National Board of Trade, have their own translations as state institutions still in use, this is not the case with some of the institutions long ago rendered superfluous or reformed, such as *Generaltullarrendesocieteten*, the name of the general customs office during the periods of tax farming, 1777–1782 and 1803–1813. Because the structure and development of the Customs Institution is not a specific focus of this book, some liberties have been taken. *Generaltullarrendesocieteten*, its state counterpart *Generaltulldirektionen* and its subservient arm *Överdirektören för Sjötullen* (also known as *Generalsjötullskontoret*) will for example simply be referred to as the Customs Office or the Maritime Customs Office.

Furthermore, the contemporary Swedish names of towns and cities are given, but with a modernised and standardised spelling. This is to avoid confusion over the many varied spellings which occurred at the time. The Swedish town Varberg is thus rendered as ‘Varberg’ rather than Warberg, and the Finnish town Kajaani is rendered ‘Kajana’ rather than the old Swedish spelling ‘Cajana’. In some instances, particularly in the Finnish provinces, the Finnish names are also included, as some of the Swedish names are very uncommon apart from in the sources. Finally, quotes in French and English are rendered in their original without alteration, but all Swedish quotes translated into English have been modernised.

One feature that is bound to create some confusion in the present study is the parallel use of different currencies. Four various currencies are referred to in this book (there were also additional currencies which will not be discussed here). From 1766 to 1776, two fiat currencies were primarily used in the court records: daler copper coins (*daler koppar mynt*), which in the text appear as D kmt, and daler silver coins (*daler silver mynt*) referred to as D smt. 3 D kmt equated to 1 D smt. While riksdaler, abbreviated Rdr, were also in use during this period, they rarely appear in the customs records before the coin reform of 1776, when numerous types of currency disappeared. At the time of the reform 1 Rdr equated to 6 D smt or 18 D kmt. The coin reform led to the withdrawal of several types of old silver coins and riksdaler became the primary coin type, with a silver standard replacing the fiat currencies. The two types of currency that appear most readily after this period are *riksdaler (specie)*, in the text referred to as Rdr, and

riksdaler banco, Rdr bco. The exchange rate between them was constant throughout the period: 1 Rdr = 1 Rdr bco. In 1789, fiat currency was used due to silver shortage, although paper money had also been in use prior to this period. Along with the re-introduction of fiat currency there was also a new currency, *riksdaler riksgälds*, Rdr rgs. While the exchange rates between these various currencies varied over time, in 1795 it was 1 Rdr (specie) = 1 Rdr bco = 1 ½ Rdr rgs. This conversion rate can be seen as a rough guide to the relationship between these various currencies. The fiat currency system was put on hold during the period 1803–1808, when silver coins were re-introduced. The exchange rates remained stable, however. Due to the confusion such a mixture of currencies and exchange rates fluctuating over time can cause, I have occasionally included conversions between the currencies. For example, 100 D kmt in 1767 is equal to 5.5 Rdr in 1777. In order to avoid confusion, the amounts recorded in Rdr riksgäld have been converted into Rdr specie, as this is the predominant currency registered.⁶⁰

Denominations

Daler

1 D kmt = 32 öre kmt

1 D smt = 32 öre smt

Riksdaler

1 Rdr = 48 shillings (skillingar, sk)

1 sk = 12 runstycken

Exchange values

1 D smt = 3 D kmt (1760) – constant

1 Rdr = 3 D smt (1770)

1 Rdr = 6 D smt = 18 D kmt (1777)

Nominal daily earnings for unskilled labourers in Sweden

1766 – 112 öre (or 3.5 D kmt)

1776 – 112 öre (or 3.5 D kmt)

1786 – 9.33 sk specie (roughly 0.19 Rdr specie)

1796 – 10.67 sk rgs (roughly 0.22 Rdr specie)

1806 – 16 sk rgs⁶¹ (roughly 0.33 Rdr specie)

Import Prohibitions

The table below builds on nine different import taxes and import prohibitions, issued 1747–1799 (Table 1.1). Some merely point out new prohibitions or the removal of prohibitions rather than providing a complete list of what was allowed or disallowed. Therefore, there is no data for all years and goods. An empty box

TABLE 1.1 Import prohibitions 1747–1799

	Import Prohibitions									
	1747	1754	1756	1757	1761	1771	1776	1782	1794	1799
Silk										
Unpatterned and monochrome		●			●	○	○	●	○	
Patterned		●			●			●	●	
Damask		●			●		○	●	●	
Taffeta					●	○	○	●	●	
Lace					●	○	○	●	●	
Neckerchieves							●	●	●	
Silk gauze					●	○	○	●	●	
Crepe					●			○	○	
Cotton - undyed										
Cotton, plain, fine			○		○	○	○	○	○	
Muslin, plain	○		○				○	○	○	
Muslin, striped and checked			○					○	○	
Guineas cloth from East India (without print for the manufactories)	○				○					
Cotton - dyed										
East Indian nankin or kitaj					●		●		●	
Wool & Worsted	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Half-wool	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Linen and hemp										
Cambric, plain, less than 6 quarters wide (anything wider prohibited)	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	
Linen/Hemp (lårft), undyed, plain.			○		○		○	○	○	