## Seminar: Trade and globalization in the eighteenth century: Sweden and Denmark

Tuesday 21 May 2019. In this seminar, which was organized as a collaboration between NAU and Research Programme in History, three speakers explored perspectives on eighteenth-century Nordic history, including themes such as globalization and global history, legal and illegal trade, commodity chains and material cultures; and also the legacies of these entanglements for contemporary debates about Nordic global entanglements.

**Leos Müller (Stockholm University): ‘Sweden’s first global century: the eighteenth century?’**

Leos Müller presented his recent book *Sveriges första globala århundrade* (Dialogos Förlag, 2018). The book challenges traditional interpretations of eighteenth-century Swedish history as an era of stagnation and isolation, by looking at Swedish entanglements in three contexts: Asia, the Mediterranean and the Caribbean. The global history of the era may be explored through studies of goods and commodity chains (‘salt, sill och slaver’); agents, their networks and mobility; politics, and especially the significance of neutrality for relatively small states.

**Anna Knutsson (EUI): ‘Contagious Globalisation: what smuggling can teach us about globalisation and the small protectionist state in the eighteenth century’.**

Anna Knutsson discussed some of the findings of a soon-to-be-completed PhD project on the history of smuggling and its impact on consumer culture in an era of protectionism in late eighteenth-century Sweden. She showed how attention to smuggling challenges established knowledge about the geographies of trade, as smuggled goods flowed across porous borders and via highly circuitous routes. Two commodities which featured especially prominently in seizures of contraband goods, namely coffee and textiles, discussed here with reference to the illegal imports of worsted clothing from the east of England.

**Niels Brimnes (Aarhus University): ‘Where did all the wealth come from? Preliminary reflections on the “efflorescent trade” in late 18th-century Denmark’.**

Niels Brimnes presented some preliminary thoughts in connection to a study of the ‘efflorescent trade’ in the late eighteenth-century Danish kingdom, and its impact on Copenhagen in particular. Taking the example of one family, he discussed how profits from Caribbean slavery formed one part of a highly complex economic enterprise, which included also shares in the Asian trading companies, domestic manufacturing and the extraction of agricultural surplus from the family’s manors.

A very interesting and wide-ranging discussion included the following themes:

* The eighteenth century in Swedish and Danish historiography; different perspectives on global history and globalization.
* The eighteenth century in public history debates; especially dealing with the legacy of slavery.
* Sweden, Denmark and the Nordic region: borders and their porosity; the role of Norway.
* The Nordic region in the context of histories of globalization, capitalism and global asymmetries.