Swedish market for cultural objects from war and conflict zones: A risk analysis
On the cover: Images of objects found in a raid by the FBI on ISIL leader Abu Sayyaf in 2015.
Photo: U.S. Department of State
Foreword

Terrorism is more readily associated with attacks and bombings than with archaeological objects from long-extinct cultures. In fact, archaeological looting contributes to the financing of terrorist attacks. This form of terrorist financing exists in countries such as Iraq and Syria. The question asked and answered in this report is whether there is a risk that the Swedish antiquities market could be a target for cultural objects looted in war and conflict areas with the aim of financing paramilitary activities or terrorism.

The report was written by the researcher Frida Larsdotter Lundgren (lawyer and art historian), project leader Lars Korsell (senior lecturer in criminology), a research and investigation consultant at the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention and a guest researcher at Dalarna University, and deputy project leader Maria Ellior (lawyer and art historian), Chief Superintendent at the National Operations Department (NOA), art protection and cultural heritage crime team.

The research project was funded by the Swedish National Heritage Board in 2016–2017. A preliminary study was carried out at the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) in 2016 and a market study was carried out by the police art protection and cultural heritage crime team in 2017.

A reference group of experts has been linked to the project. Its task was to review and carry out quality assurance of provenance and origin data for a clearly-defined group of risk objects found on the market. Christian Mühlenbock (PhD in Archaeology) and Director of Lödöse Museum, Anas Al Khabour (PhD in Archaeology), a former museum director in Raqqa, assisted with the examination of Arabic objects – except for coins. The numismatist Håkan Fransson researched coins originating from the Arab world, while Fredrik Helander, museum educator at the Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities, examined Roman and Eastern Roman/Byzantine coins. Egyptian objects, of which there were relatively few, were researched by Sofia Häggman (PhD in Egyptology), a curator at the Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities. Eva Myrdal (PhD in Archaeology), a senior researcher at Swedish National Museums of World Culture, provided assistance with contacts in the museum world and acted as a consultant to the project.

Mats Djurberg, Secretary General of the Swedish National Commission for UNESCO, contributed an afterword.

The project team would like to thank Swedish National Museums of World Culture and its staff, who provided tremendous support for the work in every way possible.

Stockholm, February 2019

Filippo Bassini
Team leader, art protection and cultural heritage crime, National Operations Department

Maria Ellior
National coordinator in the area of cultural heritage crime, National Operations Department
Content

Summary ................................................................. 5
1. Introduction ......................................................... 7
2. Previous research .................................................. 8
3. Objectives and questions ................................. 9
4. Selection of conflict areas ................................. 11
5. Method ................................................................. 18
6. Results ................................................................. 25
7. Concluding observations ................................. 35
References ............................................................. 38
Afterword ................................................................. 41

APPENDIX
Monitored search terms/categories ......................... 42
Check list field study, 2017 ................................. 43
The purpose of this study is to assess a risk: Could the Swedish art and antiquities market be a target for the types of cultural objects that are looted in war and conflict areas with the aim of financing paramilitary activities or terrorism? If a market for these objects exists, what are its characteristics?

A preliminary study carried out in 2016 defined the areas in which archaeological looting of this kind is currently taking place. Five countries were selected: Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Egypt. In collaboration with the museum world, a catalogue of “risk objects” – types of objects from the countries in the risk zone for looting and smuggling – was drawn up. A search was carried out from January to June 2017 for all objects of this kind on the entire Swedish market, which were then recorded.

1,642 risk objects with a value of SEK 1.2 million
This survey recorded a total of 1,642 risk objects with a total reserve price of SEK 1.2 million. However, of the total number of identified risk objects, online trading between private individuals accounted for 1,330 risk objects with a total reserve price of almost SEK 900,000. Besides online trading between private individuals, risk objects are available to some extent in specialist auctions. However, in principle there are no risk objects in other quality auctions or in the professional antiques trade. Since the circumstances surrounding these objects are unknown, it cannot be verified with any degree of certainty that any of them would have been looted and linked to terrorist financing. However, the research is able to show the existence of risk objects: type of object, origin in conflict areas, looting and terrorist financing. It is probably only possible to indicate a link to looting in connection with current conflicts by showing an increase in the number of objects on the market compared to the reference year before the conflicts began. Therefore, in order to strengthen the risk analysis model, the methodology of the study was also applied to two reference years with an interval of a decade before the conflicts began: all copies of auction catalogues for specialist and generalist auctions from 1997 and 2007. For 1997, there were 6 objects in auction catalogues with a total value of SEK 15,800. For 2007, the number of objects had risen to 14 and the total value was also slightly higher (SEK 24,220). The considerable difference between the reference years of 1997 and 2007 and 2017 could largely be explained by a structural transformation of the market: objects offered are now published on the Internet rather than in printed catalogues. It has therefore become cheaper to hold regular auctions and the number of objects in the market should therefore have increased. In addition to this, trading is carried out online between private individuals, which is a relatively new phenomenon that has also grown considerably in recent years. As stated above, most identified risk objects were found precisely in this online trading between private individuals.

Precious metals are most common – mostly coins from the Roman Empire
As far as types of objects are concerned, there was a clear predominance of smaller objects in precious metals, mainly coins, for all the years studied. This in itself can be seen as a risk indicator for archaeological looting and smuggling (modern metal detectors often only search for precious metals and smaller objects in precious
Swedish market for cultural objects from war and conflict zones

Metals mean a higher “kilo price” in terms of freight and a much simpler smuggling process, though not necessarily in connection with terrorism or conflicts.

Most of the identified risk objects come from the Roman Empire, which covered a significantly larger area than the area corresponding to the conflict countries investigated. This means that the risk level for such objects must be severely reduced. If objects from the Roman Empire (excluding those from the Eastern Roman Empire and Byzantine Empire) are not included in the study, the total number of risk objects falls to 596 with a total reserve price of SEK 357,125.

Gold dinars (front) with Arabic inscriptions. Photo: U.S. Department of State

Sweden – a small market for risk objects

Could the Swedish art and antiquities market be a marketplace for the types of objects looted in conflict and war zones? In terms of the amount – SEK 1.2 million at most – the Swedish market appears to be a very limited recipient of risk objects, particularly when this is seen in an international context. We should repeat that the assessment of the market is based on risk objects, not objects that have a confirmed link to looting in connection with a conflict or terrorist financing.

The difficulty of tracing objects from early cultures to modern geographical areas is also illustrated by the review of identified risk objects carried out by a team of experts. In most cases, they were unable to determine whether the objects originated from the conflict zones the study focused on. One important result of the research is therefore to highlight the significant practical difficulties involved in acting on Swedish territory against trading in risk objects.

Greatest risk for online trading between private individuals

The market channel that is considered to be most vulnerable to trading in risk objects – at present and in the foreseeable future – is online trading between private individuals. Private individuals rarely obey the ethical rules of the art trade, often lack more detailed knowledge of different countries’ export restrictions and, as this study showed, almost never record an object’s provenance. Preventive measures may therefore be relevant to reduce the risk of that trade in risk objects.
In recent years, archaeological looting and museum thefts have attracted much more attention outside the museum and archaeology world than previously. The reason for the growing interest is that looting is now taking place from the war and conflict zones our news broadcasts report from every week.

There has been a lot of attention on the fact that looting does not now consist of so-called *subsistence digging* – unorganised excavation and sale of objects to support families or small villages – but instead contributes to the financing of terrorist activities, war or conflict. The fact that ISIL/Daesh is partly financing its terrorist activities by looting and selling archaeological objects has been highlighted in particular (FBI, 2016).

There were three major terrorist attacks in Europe in 2015 and 2016. On 7 January 2015, twelve people were shot dead at the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo’s editorial office and on 13 November that same year an attack on a gathering of people in Paris led to 130 deaths. The following year, 35 people fell victim to two bombings in Brussels. According to the French magazine Paris Match (2016), there was a link between the financing of the acts and smuggling of art and cultural objects. Details have also emerged that indicate that Mohammed Atta, one of the pilots behind the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001, had attempted to sell Afghan antiquities in the USA as late as 1999 (FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, 2012).

The importance of countering financing of terrorism and conflict is high on the agenda in most countries. UNESCO, the EU, the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Swedish Government also regard looting and destruction of cultural objects as a priority cultural policy issue since it destroys cultural heritage and deprives cultures of access to and knowledge of man’s early history. The question set out in this report is whether there is a risk that the Swedish art and antiquities market may be an outlet for so-called “conflict antiquities” – ancient objects that have been looted from war-torn countries in order to finance continued conflict.
2. Previous research

It must be noted at the outset that research exists in and around the countries where looting for terrorist financing takes place. That research, often in the form of field studies and surveys in war and conflict zones, shows how and to what extent organised looting finances conflicts around the world.

Other studies, like this study, have focused on the destination countries. These studies are available in the archaeology. Using criminological methods, Campbell (2013, p. 113–153) surveyed the economic mechanisms behind the trade and the objects’ path to the west. However, the method is "the other way round" to the method adopted in this study: it follows the object from the country of origin to the destination country and not vice versa. ILLICID is an interdisciplinary project based in the Pergamon Museum in Berlin led by Professor Markus Hilgert in collaboration with UNESCO. Some parts of the project are similar to this study to the extent that a survey is carried out on the German market for Syrian and Iraqi objects (publication 2018). Sweden has not been surveyed as a transit country.

How has Sweden then been studied as a destination country in these contexts? Approximately 10–15 years ago, a short series of articles surveyed the art market in Sweden with regard to looted cultural objects. However, the survey was carried out before the current conflict situation and none of the objects originated from a specific conflict – other than an illegal conflict. Yet, it was confirmed, primarily in Lundén (2004, p. 210), that "a recent illicit origin for the objects seems probable" – and therefore the objects that the author suspected were looted in 2004 could probably also have been newly looted, which may be confirmed by the fact that imports of objects of this type are currently taking place in Sweden (and possibly also in a chain of transactions in which Sweden was always the intended final destination).
3. Objectives and questions

Discussion of choice of objectives and questions

Objectives and questions must be adapted to what it is possible to research, particularly taking into account the available data. Looting and terrorist financing are subjects that are difficult to research. Archaeological cultural objects do not have passports or travel documents: A gold coin in your hand in Sweden today could have been brought in from Palmyra last week or could derive from the extremely active trade with the Arab world in the Viking age. Therefore, it is next to impossible to prove that one individual object brought into Sweden originated in contemporary archaeological looting from a conflict zone in connection with the financing of a conflict – even with current progress in provenance research.

However, it should be possible to carry out a defined, detailed risk analysis: when the question ”do objects looted in war zones to finance a continuation of a conflict exist?” cannot be easily answered, the question ”is there a market for these types of risk objects in Sweden?” can be asked instead. The fact is that the market is a particularly good indicator of risk, since it can show both the types of objects and the origin of objects and, not least, provide information on prices – a key element in a context in which we are discussing financing of crime. The objective is therefore to answer a number of questions about the market situation in as much detail as possible: what types of market (general art trade versus specialist trade, auction houses, private trading via internet forums or auctions) are affected? What area/s will the objects come from? What types of objects are mainly represented? What types of markets are affected?

It is impossible to obtain data on the “export situation” relating to terrorist activities because it is a closed world of smuggling from countries of origin to transit and destination countries. On the other hand, information is available on what objects are at risk of looting and smuggling in each vulnerable country. The International Council of Museums, ICOM, has extensively illustrated lists of objects by country of origin in its ”Red Lists” (ICOM 2017). As will be discussed below, there is also documented information on how looting in certain countries is used for terrorist financing.

Carrying out a risk analysis on an entire market should also be a more urgent matter from the point of view of prevention than trying to trace the background of an individual object and its link to looting and terrorist financing. Even if that were theoretically possible for a few individual objects, it would not say a great deal about the market. It is probably always possible to identify an individual object with a dramatic background such as looting and terrorism, but that would hardly show anything other than what that precise object has to tell.

Of course, the existence on the Swedish market of cultural objects from war and conflict zones may be explained by reasons other than the fact that they were recently looted to finance terrorist organisations or paramilitary groups. The objects may have been here for generations and may have belonged to older collections. Researching provenance or investigating whether provenance is true is of less interest for carrying out a general risk assessment. Even at this point it is possible to state that information on the background of objects has proved to be very rare in the market studied.
Objective and key question
The key question is: Is there a market for “risk objects” in Sweden – in other words, cultural objects that can typically be looted from conflict zones and that can finance paramilitary activities and terrorism? And, if so: What is the structure of that market and the extent of the trading on it?

The Swedish market and detailed questions
In the following, the questions are formulated in detail in the light of a report on the Swedish market for antiquities.

What types of markets are affected?
In Sweden, the art and antiquities market is fairly easy to divide up into specific subcategories. The “general” auction houses basically sell all kinds of art and antiquities (modern art, older paintings, sculpture, jewellery, furniture, etc.). The situation is the same with the broader generalist shops and galleries in antiques and art. There are also a few auction houses based abroad that market their goods directly to Sweden. Like general auction houses/generalist auctions and general trade/generalist trade, there are also specialist auctions (auction houses specialising in a specific type of object or in a specific geographical provenance) and a corresponding specialist trade. These may be focused on numismatics (coins), weapons, carpets, antiquities from Eastern Asia or similar.

Online trading between private individuals will prove to be important for the results of the study. In this market, the trader is only the owner of a domain – a website – where private individuals post auctions or sales of objects at a fixed price for other private individuals. Here, the earnings for the trader arise either through advertising on the website or through a fee charged to sellers.

What areas will the objects come from? Does any area predominate – if so, why? Is it determined by factors on the Swedish market or in the country of origin.
It is of interest to know whether some country or countries at war or in conflict predominate as a country of origin. In this case, this would justify targeted controls and information. Five countries at war or in conflict were selected for the study for reasons that will be discussed below: Syria, Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan and Egypt.

How extensive is the trade in terms of SEK?
The question of the economic extent of any trade in risk objects is of particular importance because the issue of terrorist financing is of key importance to the research.

Has the range of objects from that region on the Swedish market changed since the conflicts began?
One reasonable assumption is that trade in risk objects increases during conflicts because it provides income that contributes to the financing of terrorist activities.
4. Selection of conflict areas

Since the focus of the study is to connect archaeological looting to terrorist financing or financing of continued conflict, it is important to be able to define the areas that present clear indications that they may be linked to this phenomenon. Criteria were therefore established for the areas to be included in the study. The war zones and conflict areas should meet four set criteria for the study:

- (1) there is an ongoing armed conflict;
- (2) it has lasted for at least five years;
- (3) archaeological looting has been shown to exist;
- (4) there are credible indications that this looting is financing continued conflict.

The five countries selected are listed below, along with a description of how and to what extent they meet the set criteria.

Iraq
Since the middle of the twentieth century, Iraq has been involved in a number of international conflicts and also particularly long-term internal discord. One conflict in particular is key to the looting problem addressed in this study: Daesh’s attacks on the civilian population of Iraq as well as on other paramilitary or radical groups and the conquest/occupation of the country’s land areas by that group. However, this conflict has a complex, multilateral background which stretches further back in time than the Daesh organisation (UCDP 2016).


(2) Survey of looting: Iraq is included in the ICOM’s “Red List” database of countries with cultural objects at risk of looting (ICOM 2017). Trading in objects made after 1990 is prohibited (the Government, 2015).

Archaeological looting in Iraq is extremely well documented. Comparative satellite imagery of the looting has been published on repeated occasions by intelligence services and by the media. It shows extensive excavations in areas of historical importance. This applies, for example, to comparative satellite imagery from 11 March 2011 and 28 September 2014 (AFP 2016).

(3) The looting serves to finance: Iraq, along with Syria, is unique in the context of the study because it is clear that archaeological looting finances continued conflict. A document from a raid by the police in Iraq in 2015 contains detailed information on “conflict antiquities”: Islamic State’s own accounts, correspondence and organisational structure (Keller 2015). According to this information, Daesh does not take responsibility for the excavations itself, but instead charges a “khums”, a tax on the profits of archaeological looting of around 20 per cent (FATF 2015). According to IS’ accounts for receipts for the period 06/12/2014–26/03/2015 in the documents, ”khums” brought in USD 265,000.

(4) Source verification and possible source problems for the area in question: Conflict data verified by Data on Armed Conflict and Security (DACS 2016), Consolidated List of Wars, with support from the German Foundation for Peace Research. Leaked first-hand information published by the US State Department is considered to be verified in itself.
Syria
(1) Conflict, survey: The armed conflict in Syria is probably the war that has attracted most attention in the world. Of the combatants, Daesh faces most accusations of archaeological looting to finance its terrorist activities.

The conflict in Syria is extremely multifaceted and involves a large number of parties in complex alliances. The summary below is an overview of the conflict that began after the Arab Spring of 2011 (UCDP 2016).

(2) The duration of the conflict: 2011 –
In the latter half of the twentieth century, a large number of conflicts succeeded one another in Syria. The current conflict may have been triggered during the Arab Spring, when the regime violently suppressed an attempted revolt.

(3) Looting, survey: Syria is included on the ICOM’s ”Red List” of countries with cultural objects at risk of being looted (ICOM 2017). Looting in Syria has been documented by means of an extremely large number of satellite images (Keller 2015). A certain amount of first-hand information on looting, mainly interviews in the media, is also available (BBC 2017).

(4) Indications of financing, looting: The financial objectives of the archaeological looting in Syria are supported by roughly the same sources as for Iraq. Information published by the US State Department in 2015 also shows archaeological looting in Syria. In addition, researchers at military institutes verify that looting occurs for financing purposes. Publications from governmental and international bodies support the information on terrorist financing by Daesh.

(5) Source verification and possible source problems for the area in question: Information on the conflict is provided by Data on Armed Conflict and Security (DACS 2016), Consolidated List of Wars and the German Foundation for Peace Research. In addition to this, there is first-hand information from terrorist organisations published by the US State department.

Libya
(1) Conflict, survey: The Libyan civil war has been going on since 2011. The Arab Spring, which led to Mohamar Ghadafi’s execution by a civilian lynch mob, further escalated an already unstable situation in the country (UCDP 2016). NATO bombings have also escalated the conflict. Daesh’s involvement in the Libyan conflict is fairly new, but the situation is constantly evolving.

(2) The duration of the conflict: 2011 –.

(3) Looting: Libya is included on ICOM’s ”Red List” of countries with cultural objects at risk of being looted (ICOM 2017).

Since the outbreak of the civil war in 2011, the country’s cultural heritage has been exposed to the risk of ”collateral” destruction – in other words, either accidental destruction or looting that is not directly related to the conflict: subsistence digging – providing for a single family or small village community through looting (UNESCO 2011).

(4) The looting serves to finance: In 2015, Daesh published a manifesto consisting of 13 points in which Libya’s cultural heritage was declared to be a target, not only for destruction but also for looting (The Antiquities Coalition 2015, The
Australian 2015). In view of the situation regarding looting in Syria and Iraq, it appears likely that looting and terrorist financing also exists in Libya.

(5) Source verification and possible source problems for the area in question: Information on the conflict is provided by Data on Armed Conflict and Security (DACS 2016), Consolidated List of Wars and the German Foundation for Peace Research. Applicable financing aspects, see paragraph 4.

Afghanistan

(1) Conflict, survey: As in Syria, the conflict in Afghanistan is complex and multilateral. The conflict between the Taliban movement, the civilian population and the occupying powers and the war on terror give rise to an extremely complex problem.

(2) The duration of the conflict: 1996 –.

Afghanistan has been in armed conflict since 1974 and the Taliban movement seized power in 1996 (UCDP 2016).

(3) Looting: The country’s cultural heritage has been under attack for a long time. Afghanistan is included on the ICOM’s ”Red List” of countries with cultural objects at risk of being looted (ICOM 2017).

(4) The looting serves to finance: A number of sources have linked the Taliban movement in Afghanistan to looting of ancient finds to finance its own operations and to continue the conflict (Russell 2015, Shelley 2014, Brems et al. 2009). This problem extends further back in time than the problem linked to Daesh (see above). It is likely that Daesh, an organisation closely linked to Al-Qaeda from the outset, may have derived the inspiration for its own looting activities from Al-Qaeda.

(5) Source verification and possible source problems for the area in question: Information on the conflict is provided by Data on Armed Conflict and Security (DACS 2016), Consolidated List of Wars and by the German Foundation for Peace Research. An official statement by the country’s UNESCO Director regarding looting problems was issued in 2014 (UNESCO, 2014). Information regarding conflict financing from military sources – but not first-hand information – and research.

Egypt

(1) Conflict, survey: This study focuses primarily on ongoing conflicts in which paramilitary groups are among the combatants. A reasonable delimitation for the study is the conflict that followed the ”Arab Spring”, which in Egypt led to one or two coups (in 2011 and 2014, some describing the deposing of the second president as ”a second revolution”). The Egyptian conflict is multilateral, with a number of Islamist groups opposing the regime (DACS 2016).

(2) The duration of the conflict: 2011 –.

The current conflict is directly linked to the Arab Spring of 2011, which was initiated by protests and riots in Tunisia in 2011 and was then followed by similar activism among the populations of several countries, including Egypt. Hosni Mubarak, the then President of Egypt, was forced out in January 2011 – which is known in the country as ”the Egyptian revolution”. Mohamed Morsi, a man with strong links to the Muslim
Brotherhood, came to power. Morsi was deposed in 2013 and was sentenced to death. The conflict situation in Egypt is currently extremely multifaceted. "The Egyptian crisis", with two coups, is normally said to have taken place between 2011 and 2013, but there is still a complex situation in which terrorist groups are active. The complicated situation makes it difficult to isolate who is doing the looting in Egypt. The militant jihadist group Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis swore loyalty to Daesh in November (National Counter Terrorism Center 2016).

Information on the conflict is provided by Data on Armed Conflict and Security (DACS 2016), Consolidated List of Wars and the German Foundation for Peace Research.

(3) Looting: Looting of Egypt’s cultural heritage has been going on for centuries. Egypt is also on ICOM’s "Red List" of countries with cultural objects at risk of being looted (ICOM 2017).

Egypt’s ministry for antiquities, the Ministry of State for Antiquities (2016), has issued statements on the problem of looting on several occasions over the past decade. Although Egypt could currently be considered to be a country with a reasonably well-functioning infrastructure, satellite imagery also indicates illegal excavations (Parcak et al. 2016).

(4) The looting serves to finance: In 2015, Egypt’s Foreign Minister, Sameh Shoukry, highlighted the problem of trading in cultural objects and archaeological objects in a speech in Washington on the subject of terrorist financing He mentioned both ISIL (the American name for IS/Daesh) and Al-Qaeda – and he stated that the ancient monuments in Egypt are particularly vulnerable. Several paramilitary groups – including Quwwat al-Amn al-Amm wa Quwwat al-Amn al-Markazi – have opted to join Daesh under the name ISIL-Sinai Province (IS Sinai Province). Operation Aureus (also (Aureus-Hieratica), which was supported by organisations such as Interpol and UNESCO, released a report in 2015 showing that a previously known traffic route for antiquities and archaeological objects between Egypt and Spain could have economic links to Daesh (EUROPOL, 2015).

The problem of historical mapping
One consistent problem in the study was of a historical-geographical nature. The countries selected: Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Egypt, have been known by a number of different names for millennia. Land borders have often changed, for reasons including fragmentation or merging of empires – and it is in this context that the cultural objects from the countries are marketed. Historical mapping of the area therefore becomes necessary. The problem is illustrated below: the borders of the five countries the study selected are extremely complex in geographical terms. The civilisations of the Middle East, particularly Iraq, are the oldest in the world and their historical kingdoms and empires span several of the countries selected in the study. An object from Iraq can therefore simultaneously be an object from, for example, Mesopotamia, Ur, the Byzantine Empire, the Sasanian Empire, Babylonia or the Roman Empire. At the same time, an object described as "Roman" (including Eastern Roman or Byzantine) can of course originate from a number of modern countries other than those included in the study. Objects from all the countries included in the study, except Afghanistan, could be counted as Roman if they are of the right period.

It is therefore necessary to determine how to sort and enter the objects in the catalogue in the simplest way possible: how they are marketed and named.
4. Selection of conflict areas

Iraq with Sumer

Iraq with Mesopotamia

Iraq with the Akkadian Empire

Iraq with the Assyrian Empire
4. Selection of conflict areas

Iraq with the Roman Empire

Iraq with the Sassanian Empire

Iraq with Babylonia
5. Method

5.1 Market study
The key research method is a comprehensive and labour-intensive market study of printed catalogues and auction catalogues as well as advertisements on the Internet. On auction pages that combine more than one auction house, such as the larger auction houses’ own websites, it is possible to use search terms to monitor categories of objects such as ethnographic or oriental. Appendix I contains a complete list of the search terms and object categories that were used for monitoring in the study. This list is extremely extensive – for example, many auction houses present archaeological objects under categories such as "Miscellaneous" or "Curiosities" – so every time an object in such a category was put up for sale, the researchers in the study automatically received an e-mail. The fact that there is rarely an established Swedish spelling for prehistoric land areas or cultures ("byzantinsk" and "bysanthinsk" are used equally often) meant that all types of spellings and parts of words ("forn-" [ancient], "egypt-", "arab-", "islam-") were included. A great deal of effort was also made to ensure that terms occurring in a prehistoric context (for example, "fragment") were also monitored. Around 50–75 search hits a day were received in the researchers’ e-mail for monitored object categories or search terms. An assessment was then carried out as to whether or not these objects should be considered as risk objects. The same applies to objects identified in auction catalogues.

As a tool for the market study, three reference catalogues were produced for (I) current conflict countries (cf. chapter 4), (II) types of objects subject to a risk of looting and terrorist financing, and (III) types of market in Sweden (auction houses, online trading between private individuals, etc.) These reference catalogues are described in section 5.5.

Printed catalogues were researched for the whole of 2017, whereas online advertisements were studied for the first half of 2017.

5.2 External review team
The objects for one reference month – February – were selected for review by museum experts. Numismatics experts in particular proved indispensable for the study. The coin market in Sweden is relatively large. The experts and their specialist areas are listed in the foreword.

The review was carried out as a guarantee of quality – the researcher in the study is not an archaeologist and the field study work only recorded the origin of the objects according to what was stated in advertisements and catalogues. The reliability of the results is considered to have been affected by two factors: the risk of fakes and the risk of wrongly recording a stated origin. Furthermore, there is also the underlying but more difficult to determine question of whether an object recorded as “Byzantine” or “Abbasidic”, for example, could really be considered to come from one or more of the five selected areas for the study that were included in the Abbasid Caliphate or the Byzantine Empire.

However, an archaeologist who only has access to a small catalogue image of a Byzantine object would probably never respond by saying something like "This is from Syria". In addition to the two questions on the form (see appendix) that was attached to each individual object, a further question of an even more cautious nature was added in which we asked the expert to “quantify” the likelihood of the object coming from one of the five selected areas on a scale from 1 to 5 and also a box to cross if it was completely impossible to assess any such likelihood.
5. Method

The findings of the review team are set out in chapter 6.

5.3 Market study in the field: Shops and fairs
A smaller field study was carried out in addition to the market study of catalogues and online trade. This took the form of inspecting objects in around thirty shops, at antique and coin fairs and at antiquarian book fairs. Of course, these visits were only supplementary to the research on catalogues and online trade since they only provided a snapshot of the range presented by a dealer at the time of the visit. The field study was restricted to Stockholm for reasons of time and cost, but fairs were also visited in Norrköping and Helsingborg. For the selection of shops visited, the shops were sorted by types (specialist/generalist trade).

The form filled in after each shop and fair visit is available at the end of the report (appendix II). Quantities were limited to approximate estimates of the number of risk objects per shop and the areas of origin were recorded only according to what the seller stated.

5.4 Comparison with previous auction catalogues (1997 and 2007)
The fact that in the first six months of 2017 we found X number of objects with a total reserve price/monitoring price of SEK Y does not say much, taken out of context, when we are talking about looted objects from conflict zones. However, we can use the available data to compare whether the number of objects had increased since the conflicts in question began. In the case of Afghanistan, this can be a problem, since the country has been plagued by internal conflicts for a long time and the Taliban had already established control over large areas by the end of the 1990s. However, their destruction of cultural heritage only attracted attention in 2001 with the blasting of the giant Bamiyan sculptures of Buddha in 2001. The current conflict in Afghanistan – between the Taliban and NATO forces led by the USA – began in 20011, the war in Iraq began in 2003, whereas the wars in Syria and Libya and the conflict in Egypt all began in 2011. 1997 thus becomes a reference year for a time when archaeological looting with a connection with terrorist financing could not be linked to conflict in Afghanistan and 2007 also becomes a reference year for the other four countries.

Data from the reference years 1997 and 2007 was collected by examining the National Library of Sweden’s copies of auction catalogues from all generalist auction houses and relevant specialist auction houses (militaria, coins) for those two years.

1 “Operation: Enduring Freedom” is the name of the still-ongoing invasion the USA began in 2001 in Afghanistan and the conflict between the Taliban and the domestic resistance movement can be dated to the end of 1996/ beginning of 1997. 1997 was chosen as a reference year since no evidence could be found for looting by the Taliban before the turn of the millennium.
5.5 Register catalogues

The main tools for the study were the three registers or reference catalogues compiled in 2016 on (I) the selected conflict areas (presented in chapter 4), (II) types of objects in the risk zone for looting and, finally, (III) the selected marketplaces that would be studied. These reference catalogues were then used to identify and classify risk objects on the Swedish market. Reference catalogues II and III are described below.

The registration of the objects from the catalogue and Internet study that were considered to be risk objects was carried out according to a code scheme for types of objects and types of trade in a register catalogue in Microsoft Excel. Subsets of object and market categories could therefore be studied together in relation to economic scope or to one another (for example, the economic extent of the trade in Byzantine objects on Internet auctions could be calculated).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Object Type</th>
<th>Market Type</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Near Eastern</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1,995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Near Eastern</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sassanian Empire</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Abbaside Caliphate</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Arabian medieval</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sassanian Empire</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sassanian Empire</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Partien</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Byzantine Empire</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sassanian Empire</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kingdom of Elam</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Kingdom of Elam</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Kingdom of Elam</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Kingdom of Elam</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Kingdom of Elam</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Kingdom of Elam</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Selection and cataloguing of object types: Catalogue II

A large number of object types were prepared and number-coded during the preliminary study in 2016. The aim was to create a reference catalogue for these types of objects that was as detailed as possible: constituent materials (including, for certain constituent materials such as metal, a sub-category for constituent materials – bronze, silver, copper, etc.). The object types selected for the catalogue were common enough on the market. At the same time, objects that were sufficiently regional to provide clues as to their origins were selected. Together with expert help from the museum world, one important tool was ICOM’s Red Lists for types of cultural objects at risk of being looted in conflict zones (ICOM 2017).

Certain known factors on archaeological looting and subsequent smuggling meant that the study focused on specific object types for each conflict country. Metal detectors are used by
looters of all kinds. Since detectors can also
distinguish between precious metals and base
metals, the tool is of particular interest to those
who loot for profit. Generally, therefore, objects
made of precious metals are of particular inte-
rest because of their connection to this type of
looting. As far as the study is concerned, coins
have the advantage that they can be traced very
accurately to a geographical area of origin and
time period.

Each object type can be placed in a large num-
ber of categories: country/area of origin, materi-
al, chronology, etc. An internal system for coding
these objects was necessary. This is as follows:

- Country of origin or area of origin
- Material (e.g. metal)
- Material, sub-category (e.g. precious metal)
- Object categories (e.g. coins)
- Chronology, with a sub-category of local
  chronology (i.e. precisely-dated kingdom,
  precisely-dated culture)

Each of these categories is provided with a
heading number. For example, Syria-> metal->
precious metal-> gold -> coins is thus presen-
ted as 2.1.1.2.3. This may seem cumbersome,
but since the number of object types, including
sub-categories, is so large, it would otherwise be
difficult to match the collected data against the
market and present it in a form that is easy to
grasp. After the categorisation, there follows a
short text describing the object.

In the market study, it may simply be said
that two reference catalogues were coordinated
– catalogue II of object types in the risk zone
for looting and catalogue III, which is a list of
Swedish antiques and art dealers (see below). A
similar categorisation exists in catalogue III for
types of market, geographical areas, etc. This has
resulted in an extensive codified register of risk
objects on the Swedish market. These two code
schemes, for types of object and market, were
then added to the codified register for each of the
objects found. The typology process using code
numbers allows statistical data to be processed
and presented more easily and patterns in risk
groupings (the risk ratio of object types to mar-
ket types) are then easier to discover and survey.

The catalogue of reference objects has mainly
been produced on the basis of ICOM’s “Red
Lists” – illustrated lists of cultural objects in the
risk zone for archaeological looting and smugg-
ling, supplemented by advice from Swedish
museum staff (ICOM 2017). Otherwise, the cata-
logue is supplemented with auction catalogues
(in which different Swedish terms are used) and
reference literature.

One category of objects that was completely
excluded from the register is depictions of
Buddha. These could originate from Afghanis-
tan, which was a Buddhist cultural area for a
long time, and they occur very extensively on
the Swedish market. However, Buddhism has

Silver dirham (back), probably from the Umayyad Caliphate. Photo: U.S. Department of State
been widespread across practically all of Asia and when a catalogue text or dealer’s description did not specify the country of origin, an expert review of each individual Buddhist object would have been required to determine whether the object should be included in the study or not – something that for reasons for time and cost was of course impossible for the six months the study covered.

In a statement from 2016, Syria’s Director General of Museums, Maamoun Abdulkarim, claimed that almost seventy per cent of seized cultural objects that would have been smuggled out of the country proved to be fakes (Cornwell 2016). This study has chosen not to distinguish between suspected fakes and genuine objects for two reasons. For financing terrorism, it does not matter whether the objects are fake or genuine. According to Abdulkarim, terrorist activities are financed by both fake and genuine objects. The second reason is that the study aims to survey the market for objects in the risk zone for looting and terrorist financing. The focus is therefore on the presence on the market of specific categories of objects and their likely origins, not whether they are genuine or not. The way in which the objects on the market are described by the seller is therefore extremely important – for this is what is sold, regardless of whether the object is fake or “genuine” ancient. However, the expert team of archaeologists, numismatics and museum staff connected with the study was also asked to assess whether the objects the team inspected for the reference month were genuine or not.

**Selection and cataloguing of market types: Catalogue III**

A catalogue of current antiques and art dealers in Sweden was produced in 2016. The catalogue is structured primarily by region – the four largest cities, where the Swedish antique trade is largely based, and thereafter according to the division into national regions: south and east and northern Sweden.

Under the division into regions, the trade was then structured under four main categories: general auction houses or generalist auctions (auction houses offering art objects from a very large number of object categories and eras); specialist auctions (auction houses specialising in a specific type of object or a specific geographical provenance); general antique trade or generalist trade for antiquities (with the same “product offerings” as the generalist auctions) and specialist trade.

Auction houses for specialist auctions (mainly weapons, jewellery or coins) and the shop equivalent of specialist trade were reported in the study separately from the generalist trade. This trade – generalist and specialist auctions, generalist and specialist shops – was also catalogued according to the police region where the shop or auction house has its head office.
A final sub-catalogue includes online trade, which was found to be of particular interest to the study. It lacks physical premises devoted to customer visits.

The introductory section consists of Internet-based auction houses or Internet-based meeting places for auction houses which are registered with head offices in Sweden. A sub-category of this section is traders with a business activities consisting of organising auctions between independent private individuals (e.g. Tradera). The next section is trading based abroad, but where the connection with Sweden and the focus on Swedish customers must still be seen as being so strong that the trading falls under the category of “Swedish trade”. One example of this is a Danish auction house for antiquities and collectible objects that publishes targeted advertising in Swedish and whose object descriptions are also provided in Swedish.

In addition to the auction houses and art dealers that are so well known that they must be considered as obvious, material in this study has been obtained from the Police Authority. According to the Act (1999:271) on trading in used products, a person intending to carry on commercial trade in used products must notify the authority, which keeps detailed records of notified traders in the region. This has provided a comprehensive list of names of traders – most of them being of no interest for the study. The police regions’ register of traders dealing in used products seldom had more than two or three of the region’s antiques dealers and auction houses in their lists. It is reasonable for their number to be on the small side. From the trade itself, there is only the Sveriges konst- och antikhandlarens (SKAF) [Swedish Art and Antique Dealers’ Association] own membership records of just over forty members – practically all of them being dealers with shops. The monitored trade therefore largely consisted of dealers searched for through antiques newspapers, searched out by a fairly extensive use of “keywords” in search engines (for example, searches for “auction”, “coins” etc.) or otherwise found during the work on the catalogues for the preparatory study.

Dealers that were included in the study meet one or more of the following criteria: Sales aimed at one of the general, broader types of object defined in reference catalogue II (for example numismatics), high cost profile focusing on a historically knowledgeable clientele, published catalogue material on the Internet where reference catalogue II material or material that could be associated with it (for example, the same historical period, albeit not the same geographical origin, or vice versa) was found, and/or trade aimed at a geographical or cultural area included in reference catalogue I. This selection process has been repeated for each register requested from the police authorities for the regions. The study on trade also includes the trade in art and cultural objects that takes place without the involvement of dealers. The major Swedish auction and advertisement sites are included, along with narrower forums for collectors and specialists. Data concerning the latter was mainly obtained in consultation with the museum staff consulted during the work on reference catalogue II.

The catalogue that follows, containing identified dealers, is sorted alphabetically. The Excel document’s sorting features have been used and the material has therefore been sorted according to several criteria: publication of printed catalogues, publication of catalogues on the Internet; form of commerce (trade or auction house, trade only or partly on the Internet or only physical trade); the types of objects expected to be found (if this was discernible in the data collection), etc.
Of course, as mentioned above, not all selected trade could be visited on the spot. Most of the market study took place through collected catalogue material. A possible problem may have arisen on this point. There is a risk that objects that are seen by the dealer as “problematic” in terms of their origin or provenance are simply withheld from publication and are instead offered directly to the customers known to the dealer from previous transactions.

With regard to the international Internet-based online market for art and cultural objects, it must be pointed out that buyers in Sweden who order objects from abroad at a distance belong to the Swedish market to the same extent as trading that takes place entirely in Sweden. However, a large proportion of dealers selling to Sweden are excluded because they were international and lacked special marketing aimed at Sweden. However, they can still sell to buyers in Sweden but, because no data can be obtained on these sales, this export trade is not included in the study. An international site such as Ebay, which acts as an intermediary in international contacts between buyers and sellers, does not disclose information on the trading that takes place between the website’s members. Since Swedes are extremely active as far as internet trading is concerned, there could be hidden statistics for this part of the trade.

Also, not all buying and selling pages for private individuals in Sweden were monitored: Some had no features such as monitoring of objects or keywords, and several were excluded because they did not include the category of goods studied at all.

A certain “standardisation problem” also occurred since in the Swedish language there are no generally accepted terms for the types of objects searched for. The objects searched for, mainly from the Middle East but to some extent also from areas included in the Roman Empire, are called by different names. An object from Iraq can be called “Islamic” at one auction house, regardless of whether it was made five hundred years before Muhammad wrote his prophecies. At another auction house, the same object could instead be entered as “Oriental”, a term that also includes objects from China and India. A third market place could offer the object using the slightly dated and exotic term “ethnographic”, whereas a fourth might classify it according to the division into continents and call it “Asian”. This obviously creates methodological problems when the searched objects are to be identified. We have chosen to search for objects from the Middle East in all these categories in published catalogue materials and also in a number of more general or misleading materials. The same problem exists for classical antiquities – the Roman, pre-Roman or Greek Cypriot object types that are of interest to the study.

The anonymisation of market operators was extremely important in the study. As stated above, this study is a risk analysis whose purpose is not to trace individual objects to looting and terrorist financing or point out irregularities by dealers. All register cataloguing of an object is therefore cleaned of all data that could indicate who offered it for sale. Only the type of trade has been specified.
6. Results

An overall summary of the results below points out the most striking results: The most common region of origin is the Roman Empire. Among the objects, smaller objects in precious metals, particularly coins, predominate. Finally, online trading by auction between private individuals is by far the largest market channel for trading in risk objects.

6.1 Results of the market study on auctions
As stated above, the market study was conducted on auctions between 1 January and 30 June 2017. Every day yielded an average of 7–8 objects that could be classified according to the object catalogue and then entered in the coded register. During the six months of the study, a total of 1,642 objects were entered in the register and their value amounted to a total of SEK 1,190,112 (EUR 124,217). The median object is a bronze Roman coin with a reserve price of SEK 1, whereas the average reserve price for objects in the entire object register is SEK 725.

Areas of origin
Modern geographical names were specified for a very small number of objects. The objects were always entered in the register with the origin that the seller stated in the description and only seven sellers indicated Syria as the origin and three sellers indicated Iraq. The reason may be to avoid the objects being associated with violence, terror and archaeological looting. At the same time, for example, a gold coin minted in Baghdad in 896 is in no way Iraqi. It is a coin from the Abbasid Caliphate. Although the "Roman Empire" (66.1%) in figure 1 includes the whole empire, 8.3% of the objects were specified as "Eastern Roman" or "Byzantine". If we include these two "Roman Empires" in the Roman Empire, together they account for less than 74.4% of the identified risk objects.

Libya is the only conflict area studied that has not appeared in catalogues or advertisements under its modern name. The country was a central province of the Roman Empire and first came under Arab rule in the 1000s. Because of

Figure 1: Objects by area of origin (number of objects).

2 It is likely to be Irak/Iraq, with its western spelling — the name the British gave the colony around 1920.
Swedish market for cultural objects from war and conflict zones

this, much of the country’s older art has a Roman, sometimes almost Hellenistic character and it can therefore easily be ascribed to an incorrect origin by an art dealer with an untrained eye. Although the conflict in Libya began in 2011, it was not until 2015 that IS/Daesh published its manifesto for looting in the country and therefore a small number of Libyan objects ought to have reached the Western world (The Antiquities Coalition 2015, The Australian 2015).

In the category of Other (4%), there were single names or terms – for example Arab Middle Ages (the Middle Ages was a European era and there was no corresponding period in the Arab world), Near Eastern, which should correspond to Middle Eastern, Bactrian (an older Central Asian culture that included Afghanistan) or the Seleucids (a population which had its power base in Syria up to around 200 BC). Otherwise, there were more or less detailed descriptions: “muslimsk gammal tid” [Ancient Muslim] or “Främre Orienten, möjliga arameisk, 1700-tal eller tidigare” [Middle East, possibly Aramaic, 1700s or earlier].

The object descriptions for all 19 objects declared to originate from Afghanistan indicated that the objects were from eastern Afghanistan. However, most of these objects are probably fakes or composite fakes (see below under Analysis of results). Here, modern geography and historical cultural areas are mixed according to what the seller stated.

In terms of the size of the total reserve price, the Roman Empire is predominant (70%), as is the case with the objects’ origin (66.1%). If the Eastern Roman/Byzantine Empire is included, the proportion of the total reserve price is 74.2%.

6.1.1. Separate report on results excluding objects from the Roman Empire

The fact that 70% of the total amounts relate to objects from the Roman Empire is obviously a problem when it comes to ascribing them to the study’s five selected conflict areas. Each of these areas was included in the Roman Empire – in some cases only part of the country’s present area and in other cases virtually all. As stated above, the Roman Empire included both the Western and the Eastern Empires, which makes objects from this area difficult to classify. How should objects be assessed when they are referred to as Eastern Roman or Byzantine, taking into account the fact that they may be “risk objects” from the Middle East? The geographical extent of the Roman Empire means that the risk level

Figure 2: Distribution by area of origin (price in SEK).
Historical map-drawing of the extent of the Roman Empire in the countries studied.
for Roman objects should be lowered. We therefore choose to present the results briefly below, where objects classified as "Roman" have been removed (though objects classed as "Eastern Roman" or "Byzantine" still remain):

**Figure 3**: Distribution by area of origin, excluding the Roman Empire (number of objects). Total number of objects: 596.

**Object types**
The Swedish numismatic trade is vigorous, which is reflected in the number of objects or "lots" (a "lot" in the context of an auction is a group of objects that is offered together, often as a

**Figure 4**: Distribution by origin, excluding the Roman Empire (price in SEK). Total amount: SEK 357,125.
In terms of numbers, coins clearly predominate among the object types (92.3%), followed by jewellery (4.1%) and sculptures or fragments of sculptures in clay or sandstone (2.3%).

However, the picture changes significantly when it comes to reserve amounts for each of the object groups. The average price for a coin (or a "lot" of coins) is SEK 468, compared with the average reserve price for a sculpture, which is SEK 8,751. The reason why the reserve price for a sculpture is considerably higher than the price for coins can possibly be explained by coincidences. In this case, the price of an individual, extremely precious sculpture dragged up the average reserve price for the entire object category (which would otherwise have been significantly lower – SEK 2,605). Within a time frame of six months and with only 37 objects in the object category of sculpture, deviations like this become extremely noticeable. The median object, described in the introduction to the chapter as a Roman bronze coin, had a reserve price of SEK 1 (the price interval for coins was between SEK 1 and SEK 60,000).

In the case of materials, which in a looting context can often be of significance in view of the use of modern metal-detectors, metal objects clearly predominate (95.6%). Precious metals such as gold, silver and copper are almost always found in some type of alloy.

---

Figure 5: Distribution by object type (number of objects).

Figure 6: Distribution by object type (price in SEK).

---

4 No quantitative estimate of the extent of the use of metal detectors in this study’s selected conflict areas is likely to have been carried out to date, but in Hardy, S. A. (2017), the link between metal detectors and archaeological looting is still made clear.
One property in particular characterised the types of objects studied. The overwhelming majority bore characteristics that were remarkably distinctive for objects in the risk zone for both looting and smuggling. They were small, and they consisted of precious metal alloys: in other words, objects that are characterised by the fact that they are easy to smuggle, with a high "kilo price" in relation to the freight cost and that are also made of a material that today’s looters primarily search for using modern metal detectors (Hardy, 2017). This, in itself, need not mean anything in terms of whether conflict antiquities are actually present in our markets, but it is probably the case that the risk of this is increasing.

The results should be reasonably reliable in terms of types of objects. Types of objects are not difficult to determine in themselves, particularly according to the relatively simple division chosen by the study ("coin", "vessel"), and both the results for economic distribution and the results for distribution in terms of numbers of objects should therefore be certain.

**Type of market operators**

The study has pointed out two very clear "risk areas" above in terms of origin and types of object: the Roman Empire and smaller objects in precious metals. One, if possible, even clearer risk area emerges from the results of the study in relation to reference catalogue III (Types of markets), though the report on this requires the introduction of a new term. The art and antiquities market in Sweden has for a long time consisted of clearly divided sectors: the auction houses, the galleries and the shops (and to some extent also the flea markets). However, since the beginning of the 2000s, a new type of market has evolved: companies that run Internet sites where
private individuals can sell second-hand objects to other private individuals and where sellers themselves assume legal and practical responsibility for advertising goods, images, descriptions and so on. In this market, companies generate profits through advertising and/or commission on goods sold. We will refer to this trade as “online trading between private individuals” below.

As shown below, 1,345 of the 1,642 objects registered in the study were found on this type of market – in practice a market share of 81.2%.

Figure 9: Distribution by market type (number of objects).

However, with regard to the economic market share of online trading between private individuals, the situation is somewhat different: 50.3 %.

The low reserve prices in online auctions may explain some of this “distortion”. For further analysis, see chapter 7.

Figure 10: Distribution by type of market; price in SEK.

6.2 Field study of shops and fairs
As stated above, a smaller field study was also carried out through a review of objects in thirty-two generalist and specialist shops and at four generalist and specialist fairs. During the study in the generalist shops and at a generalist fair, only six objects were identified, of which four were being offered for sale as Roman. Two ancient objects (category: weapons, bronze) were described by the dealer as Afghan or Indian.
However, at specialist fairs (the specialist fairs visited were numismatic or antiquarian fairs), the result was different: out of 22 specialist dealers, 12 were offering these risk objects for sale.

In some cases, when an individual dealer might have had objects from more than one region, the distribution according to the number of dealers who specified an origin from a risk area was as follows:

Figure 11: Number of dealers (specialist trade) that stated an origin for risk objects offered.

The number of risk objects in the specialist trade that offered them for sale was estimated to be between 5 and 10 (two dealers), 10 and 25 (six dealers) and over 25 (four dealers). In this regard, it should be added that all specialist fairs at which the objects in question were found and registered were numismatic and no risk objects could be identified at the antiquarian fairs visited.

6.3 Comparison of risk objects in auction catalogues from 1997 and 2007

Data from the reference years 1997 and 2007 was collected by examining the National Library of Sweden’s auction catalogues from all generalist auction houses and relevant specialist auction houses (militaria, coins) for those two years.

As shown in the tables below, there were very few objects that could be categorised as current risk object types for the study for these two years: a total of twenty for both years. It was predominantly a case of Roman objects (mainly coins, but also a fragment of a marble column), a few edged weapons and a helmet at specialist auctions for militaria (of which one edged weapon was classed as “Afghan” and one as “Arab”) and three earthenware vessels or jars.

The prices were quite high compared to the average price for the objects for 2017 (SEK 725): SEK 2,633 for 1997 and SEK 1,730 for 2007. This can be explained in part by the low online reserve prices in the online market for trading between private individuals (as stated above, the median value for a reserve price in 2017 was SEK 1), though the figure should also be adjusted for inflation. SEK 2,633 in 1997 is equivalent to SEK 3,307 at today’s values and SEK 1,730 in 2007 is equivalent to SEK 1,925 in 2017 (Consumer Price Index, SCB).

The fact that only the established auction trade had the means to print catalogues – which always entails a higher cost, particularly if they contain images of the objects offered for sale – in the reference years may also have contributed to the increase in the average value of reserve prices. In 2017, only a small number of established and exclusive auction houses are still printing catalogues. The remaining auction houses publish the objects they are offering for auction either on their own websites or on a combined page for several auction houses.
6. Results

Figure 12: Increase in objects at intervals of a decade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of objects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>1,643</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 13: Increase in total cost (SEK) at intervals of a decade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cost (SEK)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>15,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>24,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>1,190,112</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fact that the number of risk objects in the market has risen to such an extent since the reference years 1997 and 2007 is worth analysing in more detail. In addition to looting in conflict zones, there may be several explanations for the increasing volume. Some of them will be discussed below.

The data for trade in 1997 and 2007 was only collected through printed catalogues. It thus excludes any trade that occurred between private individuals (flea markets, sales between friends or members of special-interest associations, etc.). In the study for 2017, this trade accounted for a very large proportion (50.3%) of the total market. The largest Swedish online company for auctions between private individuals, Tradera, was founded in 1999, but lacks archiving or search functions where completed auctions can be reviewed. This structural transformation of the Swedish art market means that the total number of objects, as well as their total cost, becomes skewed: this multiplication is unlikely to be representative of the market as a whole.

There is also good reason to point out that the art market and trends in it fluctuate sharply. Of course, the auction catalogues for both 1997 and 2007 contained ancient objects, but they were then predominantly from China, South-east Asia and Turkey. Could the supply in 2017 have been influenced by a change in demand and the Swedish taste for other types of objects, or is it a result of the increase in the availability of "risk objects" from conflict zones?

6.4 Review of results by the expert team

In total, the 77 objects registered for February 2017 were reviewed. It should be noted that the low figure compared to the average number of objects per month (273) is due to the fact that no auctions were held at generalist or specialist auction houses in February. The review took the form of the expert viewing the published catalogue images to which the study researchers had access, not the object itself. This could have hampered their ability to ensure authenticity or origin.

The questions put to each of the experts were answered according to the following diagram:
The last, more complex question was: "In your opinion, how likely is it that the object could originate from present-day Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Egypt or Libya?". Except for the four Egyptian objects, all other objects reviewed by our experts were sold under the name of historical cultural areas rather than present-day countries. The expert was asked to grade the likelihood of the object originating from one of the selected countries on a scale from one to five, where 1 was "highly unlikely", 2 was "unlikely", 3 was "possible", 4 was "likely" and 5 was "highly likely". The "cannot be assessed" option was also available. For the object group of "Roman coins", no such assessment was considered possible at all. The extremely large geographical extent of the Roman Empire in combination with the poor overall condition of the coins and the lack of a distinct regional character meant that no more detailed geographical information could be recovered.

Of course, the fact that the experts consulted found it so difficult to link the risk objects to a specific country must be said to have an impact on the risk analysis model. Can the difficulties in determining the origin of the objects be due to the nature and size of the Swedish market? Our domestic art and antiquities market is relatively modest and the ancient objects offered are not "masterpieces" but rather "cheap articles" and "Friday afternoon copies" – coins and simple figures, which seldom have any distinct regional character.
7. Concluding observations

One clear conclusion is that it is not possible to look for specific Syrian, Iraqi or Libyan objects. Such objects are very seldom found in the market under those national names. In order to search for objects from these countries, it is therefore necessary to use the historical geographical names of the areas which are considered to correspond to the States concerned as far as possible. The problem is that the risk objects can come from cultures whose geographical borders do not coincide with the modern states in which looting and terrorist financing occur. Objects from the Roman Empire, whose geographical extent was substantially greater than the areas of conflict studied, have proved to be particularly problematic. The risk analysis model would therefore probably give a different outcome were it applied to a larger, more exclusive market in which the objects were so unique that their origins could be determined with greater precision.

The connection between the risk analysis method and the results of the study bears repeating. The premise was not to show whether objects looted in conflict zones with the aim of financing terrorism existed in Sweden. The aim was to demonstrate whether Sweden poses a risk as an outlet for these objects and, if so, the extent of that risk in terms of the origin of the objects, the types of object and the types of market. The results have therefore not provided any answer as to whether any conflict antiquities exist in Sweden – but they have provided three remarkably clear answers with regard to the risk.

In order to illustrate the size of the market for risk objects, it should be seen in relation to the Swedish antique trade in general. Net sales for antiques trading in shops in 2015 amounted to SEK 738,000,000. This would mean that trading for 2017 in risk objects (including Internet trading) corresponds to 0.32% of those sales. The size of the Swedish risk object market must also be seen in an international context. During the same comparison period (January – June 2017), there were 705 risk objects in a single UK auction house, with a total reserve price equivalent to SEK 4,856,740. Data for the size of the British art market as a whole is only available for 1999, when it was estimated to be equivalent (adjusted for inflation) to SEK 38.1 billion (MTI, 2000).

By far the largest over-representation in the types of market was the online market for trading between private individuals, where 81.2% of the objects were found. This gives rise to some conclusions. Such trade constitutes, in itself, a risk market for antiquities since neither the seller nor the buyer is bound by, or is perhaps even aware of the ethical requirements of the antiques trade with regard, for example, to searches for provenance or good business practice. Private individuals also, understandably, have less knowledge of property legislation concerning objects acquired in bad faith. When a situation arises whereby a very large number of looted or stolen objects is to be disposed of, the target market for less valuable objects – which also characterises the risk objects that the study identified on the Swedish market – may well be trade of this kind.

---

5 Statistics Sweden, SNI code 47.791. Antiquities trading on the internet and wholesale trading in antiquities has no individual SNI codes at Statistics Sweden and therefore cannot be reported separately. The proportion calculated on the basis of 2 x the total amount for 6 months’ trading.

6 British auction houses (examined categories: "Islamic Antiquities" and "Western Asiatic Antiquities", two auctions examined during the period.)
Historisk kartritning över Romarrikets utsträckning över de studerade länderna.
It is therefore reasonable for the risk objects to be in the online market for private individuals to a great extent.

As for the predominance of small objects of precious metals – easily found with modern metal detectors and much sought after due to the fact that they are easy to smuggle and the high "kilo price" – as well as online trade between private individuals, where provenance research is likely to take place very rarely, a conclusion can also be drawn regarding the risk. In view of the results of the survey of types of object and types of market, it may be verified that this would be the situation if the looted ancient objects began to be deposited on the Swedish market.

Finally, as regards the way in which the data presented on market types can lead to possible measures and prevention programmes, this is where there are possibly the clearest indications that targeted initiatives can be carried out. Since the online market for trading between private individuals is heavily over-represented, this is where any possible measures should be put in place. It is also much simpler to aim social measures at stakeholders in society – representatives of the trade – than it is to aim them at particularly over-represented categories of objects or areas of origin. Over-represented object categories are often closely linked to certain types of market operators and, for example, information targeted at the trade can in several cases be adapted according to a particularly over-represented type of object (for example, when coins are over-represented, at the numismatic specialist trade). As far as legislative work is concerned, the possibility of applying stricter requirements for good faith in trading in cultural objects can harmonise Swedish law with international private law (here see mainly the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention).

The report’s conclusion must be that the risk for the Swedish antiquities market is extremely marginal from an international point of view, in terms of both the number of objects and the pricing, and that trading in risk objects constitutes a very small part of Swedish trading. However, some trading in risk objects exists.
References


Campbell (2015).


Council Regulation (EC) No 2465/96 of 17 December 1996 concerning the interruption of economic and financial relations between the European Community and Iraq


Government trade sanctions against Iraq, 2003: 2465/96
http://www.regeringen.se/regeringens-politik/utrikes--och-sakerhetspolitik/sanktioner/sanktioner-mot-irak/


Lundén (2004).


Swedish market for cultural objects from war and conflict zones


UNESCO (2014). Statement from the Afghanistan Director General for UNESCO.

In recent years, the world’s attention has focused on questions concerning cultural heritage. Daesh’s widespread and systematic destruction of cultural heritage in Syria and Iraq and other places has been filmed and distributed via social media in order to provoke and divide. What is perhaps less well known is the illegal trade in cultural objects that often follows in the footsteps of destruction or conflict. Globally, this trade is widespread and generates large sums to finance serious organised crime and continued terrorism. This has also been brought to the attention of the UN Security Council through Resolutions 2199 and 2347. UNESCO, the United Nations Education, Culture, Science and Communication Agency, is responsible for cultural heritage work on a global scale. There are a number of legal instruments supporting the work.7

Stopping the trade requires international cooperation and it also makes demands on our society in terms of knowledge, actions and, not least, close cooperation between public authorities, organisations and the antiquities and auction industries. Sweden is not a large market for this trade, but we as consumers and tourists have a responsibility not to buy illegal cultural objects or cultural objects without an established provenance and documentation, whether in a bazaar as a tourist or online. You can make a difference as a private individual. Customs and the police depend on tip-offs, so it is extremely important to contact them if you suspect a cultural heritage crime.

Mats Djurberg
Secretary General, Swedish National Commission for UNESCO

---

APPENDIX I:
Monitored search terms/categories

MONITORED CATEGORIES
Antiken [Antiques]
Diverse [Miscellaneous]
Etnografica [Ethnographic]
Etnografika [Ethnographic]
Forntid [Prehistoric times]
Kuriosa [Curiosities]
Mynt [Coins]
Numismatik [Numismatic]
Romarriket [Roman Empire]
Orientala [Oriental]
Orientalisk konst [Oriental art]
Samlarföremål [Collectibles]
Övrigt [Other]

MONITORED SEARCH TERMS
Note: An search with an asterisk is used to monitor all variants of a word. For example, "Egypt *" gives hits for both ”Egypt” and "Egyptian”.

Abbasid*
Afghan*
Antiken [Antiquity]
Arab*
Arkeolog*
Assyri*
Baktri*
Bysant*
Centralasi*
*-dynastin [dynasty]

Egypt*
Elymaitisk*
Fenic*
Forn* [Ancient]
Fragment
Främre Orienten [Middle East]
Funnen [Found]
Gravfynd [Burial find]
Ikhanaat*
*-imperiet [empire]
Iruk
Islam
Jordfynd [Earth find]
Kalifat* [Caliphate]
Kärle [Receptacle]
Lergods [Earthenware]
Liby*
Mellanöstern [Middle Eastern]
Mesopotami*
Muslim*
Osmansk*
Ottomansk*
Partien [Parthia]
*Riket [The kingdom]
Rom*
Sassanid*
Selukid* [Seleucid]
Skyti*
Sultan*
Syri*
Uumayad*
APPENDIX II: Check list field study, 2017

Shop town or city:

..................................................................................................

Shop category:

☐ Generalist trade antiques
☐ Specialist trade antiques
☐ Antiques fair
☐ Specialist fair

Are there ancient objects?

☐ Yes ☐ 1–5 ☐ 5–10 ☐ 10–25 ☐ 25 +
☐ No

Are there ancient objects that can be assumed to be from the zones selected in the study?

☐ Yes ☐ 1–5 ☐ 5–10 ☐ 10–25 ☐ 25 +
☐ No

Are there ancient objects that are expressly from the zones selected in the study?

☐ Yes ☐ 1–5 ☐ 5–10 ☐ 10–25 ☐ 25 +
☐ No

Are there ancient objects marketed as being from the historical geographical areas that include the zones selected in the study?

☐ Yes ☐ 1–5 ☐ 5–10 ☐ 10–25 ☐ 25 +
☐ No

Mark one or more origins for the objects:

☐ Syria
☐ Iraq
☐ Afghanistan
☐ Libya
☐ Roman Empire
☐ Byzantine
☐ Middle Eastern/Arab