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## "Of the Finest Quality"

### The Swedish Diplomats' role within global consumption 1710-1740

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# **“Of the Finest Quality”**

## **The Swedish Diplomats’ role within global consumption 1710-1740.**

*Emma J. Forsberg*

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, global consumption increased, resulting in an upsurge in object mobility. One of the fundamental reasons behind this upsurge was the early modern diplomats, whose work not only entailed peace-mongering, espionage, and representing their sovereigns. They were also central to the increase of, and limitations on, global trade. Consequently, the result of this was not only an amplified amount of diplomatic gifts and tributes given from sovereign to sovereign across European and extra-European courts. It also meant that the diplomats, in their representation of their state's position within a broader political hierarchy, were expected to partake and engage in global material consumption. Thus, the diplomats' role in early modern consumption was central to creating trade and safekeeping their own states' merchants abroad.

Through a micro-historical perspective, this paper examines the diplomat’s consumption of international material goods as individual actors within a larger political and social sphere between 1710-and 1740. By examining a few case studies on Swedish diplomats accredited to different influential courts, the paper aims to show how the said consumption was constructed and enacted. What role did the diplomat take within global trade? What kind of consumer goods, objects and gifts did the diplomat purchase and use within their sphere, and how did this affect trends within consumption?