

concentrates on the folk migrations, seeking explanations for the origins of the Finnic-speaking peoples of Häme, Karelia and Ingria.²¹

1835-1860

The corpus of information, theory and methodology contained in Sjögren's publications of the six years 1828-1834 set the agenda for much of the research into Finno-Ugrian matters in the final phase of my periodisation, 1835-1860, as successive scholars both extended and challenged Sjögren's conclusions. History, however, has obscured the significance of this fact and also of the fact that Sjögren's position in the Academy, especially after his promotion to Academician for the Linguistics and Ethnography of the Finno-Ugrian and Caucasian Peoples in 1844, made him the most powerful person in this area of studies in the Russian Empire. This position gave him unrivalled access to materials, including books forbidden to ordinary citizens. His approval was essential for the *imprimatur* of the Academy and other academic bodies in Russia in respect of works on Finno-Ugrian subjects. His political authority in the Academy could secure substantial funding for research projects, access to libraries and archives, introductions to officials and patrons, and official warrants and support to undertake research in remote areas of Russia. The principal and most illustrious beneficiary of this support was Matthias Alexander Castrén, whose major studies in Siberia were largely made possible by Sjögren's arranging for him to be attached as a researcher to Middendorff's expedition.²² The pages of Sjögren's unpublished diary and his correspondence show that he used his influence to secure support for the research of many of the leading nationalist figures of the 1840s and 1850s, including Elias Lönnrot and August Ahlqvist. For these reasons, my treatment of the 1835-1860 phase will start with a discussion of the reception of the work Sjögren produced during the third phase, rather than with the underlying dynamics. Indeed, it can be argued that the academic dynamic of that period was in no small measure shaped by Sjögren himself.²³

Using the methods and criteria Sjögren developed, other scholars embarked on more specialised and critical work. Peter von Köppen, for example, was able to undertake his demographic research on the peoples of Ingria and Lönnrot and Ahlqvist were able to produce their studies of Vepsian and Vote because Sjögren had provided the means of classifying these languages and had delineated the areas where they were spoken. Sjögren's description of Komi made it possible for this language to become the subject of serious linguistic research — as demonstrated by H.C. von der Gabelentz and F.J. Wiedemann — long before most other languages of Russia. In

onomastics, it was Sjögren's work on the Finnic substratum in northern Russia that paved the way for Castrén's study of *zavoločeskaja čud'*, which, in turn led to the work of D.E.D. Europæus and H.A. Reinholm.

In Finland, Sjögren's work found an immediate response. Much of the information he had provided in Swedish-language publications in Finland and in the German-language publications of the Academy of Sciences during the years 1824-1834 became common knowledge almost immediately. His identification and description of the Vepsians and peoples of Ingria belong to this category. Likewise, the ideas he advanced about the history and distribution of the Finnic peoples were soon to enter the body of general knowledge. Some of his ideas were quickly taken up by other scholars and were subsequently linked to their names rather than to Sjögren's. Such was the case of many of Sjögren's ideas borrowed by Castrén, Lönnrot and J.F. Cajan.

Sjögren's position in the Academy of Sciences was of enormous importance in spreading his ideas to a much wider public than would have been possible had he been working in Helsinki. Sjögren's work found a ready response in Germany. In the 1830s, the German historian F.H. Müller, a specialist on early German and Russian history, drew on Sjögren's theories about the evolution of the Finno-Ugrian peoples in his two-volume *Der Ugrische Volksstam* (1837, 1839) and used Sjögren's studies of the *Jem'* to define the ancient home of the Häme people, and of *Zavoloč'je* to describe the ancestors of the Karelians. Other scholars who responded to Sjögren's German-language writings at this time included the German, H.C. von der Gabelentz, who was to base his research (1841) into Komi on Sjögren's linguistic description,²⁴ and the Estonian F.J. Wiedemann who was eventually to continue Sjögren's work in the Academy and posthumously completed Sjögren's dictionary of the Komi language (1880).

Scholars both in Finland and elsewhere were quick to follow Sjögren in clarifying the origin of the Vepsians. The formal recognition of their existence was signalled by their inclusion in von Köppen's *Russlands Gesamt-Bevölkerung im Jahre 1838*, published in 1844 by the Academy of Sciences. However, at Sjögren's instigation, Lönnrot had already visited the Vepsians and made a study of their language in the 1840s, while Europæus had published information about features of the language and sought to classify it in an article in the Finnish journal *Saima* in 1845. Similarly; Cajan also refers to the Vepsians in his history of Finland (1846),²⁵ elaborating Sjögren's theory of their descent from the *ves'* of Nestor's Chronicle. It was finally through Lönnrot's work, however, that the Vepsian language was properly codified and its relation to other Finnic languages defined when he published his

study *Om det Nord-Tschudiska språket* in 1853, the dissertation which obtained for him the Chair of Finnish at Alexander's University in Helsinki. The point at which Sjögren's name ceased to be associated with Vepsian was in the 1860s with Ahlqvist's detailed description of the language, the exact location of the speakers, together with his rejection of Sjögren's theory of the derivation of their ethnonyms from Old Russian.²⁶

Sjögren's study of the Finnic population of the St Petersburg Government and the origin of the name Ingria (*Ueber die Finnische Bevölkerung des St.-Petersburgschen Gouvernements und über den Ursprung des Namens Ingermannland*, 1833), with its identification of the Äyrämöinen and Savakko Finns and the major advance in knowledge of the Votes and Izhors stimulated a wave of popular interest. In Academy circles in St Petersburg, local interest was the explanation. In Finland, in addition to the intrinsic historical importance of Sjögren's new theories, his observations in the work about traditional Finnish oral poetry found a ready response. Intellectuals were following with keen interest the preparation of Lönnrot's *Kalevala*, and for this reason information about a living oral poetry tradition to the south in addition to that of Archangel Karelia in the north had a special topicality. Kattila, the village where Sjögren had recorded specimens of Vote poetry, was soon to have a magnetic effect on Finnish folklorists and others from further afield, including the Hungarian Finno-Ugrist, Antal Reguly.

Sjögren's work on Ingria found its way to a wider public through von Köppen's numerous ethnographic studies. In a lecture delivered in 1844 to the Academy of Sciences, von Köppen repeated Sjögren's conclusions on the grounds that there was nothing that he could add to what Sjögren had already said. In the account that followed, von Köppen outlined the location of each group, adopted Sjögren's ethnonyms and included in his succinct résumé Sjögren's conclusions about the history of the area. Later, in 1852, again in connection with his work on the ethnographic map of Russia, Köppen presented a full outline of the Finnic peoples, drawing on Sjögren's work in particular for his delineation of the Baltic Finns, whom he divided into Finns, Karelians and Čud'; the Čud' he defined as Vepsians, Votes, Estonians and Livonians, while he included as Karelians the Izhors and the Äyrämöinen and Savakko Finns.

The ethnographic side of Sjögren's investigation formed the substance of an article on the Ingrian Finns by D. Uspenskij which appeared in 1845 in *Finskij Vestnik*. Without acknowledging his source, Uspenskij repeated much of Sjögren's ethnographic information; Uspenskij's account of Izhor wedding ceremonies, of ritual connected with death, childbirth and calendar festivals together with a translation of

an Ingrian folk poem are in part a summary and in a part a plagiary of Sjögren's work. Uspenskij's own contribution to knowledge of the Ingrian Finns is limited to brief notes on Vote customs. A Swedish translation of Uspenskij's article was published later the same year in the Finnish journal *Borgå Tidning* accompanied, ironically, by an editorial note congratulating Uspenskij on his 'outstanding knowledge of Finnish and the Finnish past.'²⁷

By 1845, Finnish scholars had begun to develop their growing interest in the related peoples of Ingria. When Lönnrot travelled to Estonia in 1844-1845, he followed Sjögren's advice and visited Kattila where he obtained examples of Kalevala-type oral poetry for his work on a new edition of the *Kalevala*. The publication of a selection of these poems in the 1847 edition of the Finnish *Fosterländskt Album* showed that Uspenskij's article had not escaped attention in Finland, for the editor of the album referred his readers to the *Borgå Tidning* account for further information about the Votes. This example of the circular route by which the results of Sjögren's research reached a wider public provides an illustration of the various routes by which his ideas passed into common knowledge.

It was Sjögren's work on the historical development and distribution of the Finnic peoples that excited most interest and debate among the following generation of scholars. His ideas were at first followed uncritically. Subsequently, more detailed research which took Sjögren's work as its starting point led to changes and extensions of his theories. A major advance occurred in the 1850s as research began to move from a polymath approach to a narrower but deeper focus on a single discipline. Thus although Sjögren's writings on the overall pattern of the ancient history and distribution of the Finnic peoples continued to have some validity, even after the 1860s, the main body of his ideas had already been incorporated into the work of other scholars at a much earlier date. With the publication of Castrén's research in the late 1840s and 1850s, the body of Sjögren's work dealing, for example, with *Zavoloč'je* had already ceased to be relevant.

That Sjögren's theories about the distribution of the Finno-Ugrian peoples took firm root is demonstrated by the work of his protégé, Castrén. After Lönnrot, Castrén was the first scholar to follow Sjögren into the field for the purpose of linguistic, onomastic and ethnographic research. Furthermore, Castrén's publications and correspondence demonstrate the value of Sjögren's work to him both as a starting point and as a measure on which he tested and developed his own ideas. The first works in which Castrén examined in detail Sjögren's theories of the distribution of the Finno-Ugrian peoples resulted from his expedition of 1841-1844, which had taken him through Russian Lapland and Karelia to Archangel and thence to regions

inhabited by the Permian and Volga Finns and the Samoyeds. Among the results of this journey was Castrén's description of the Komi language. While his classification of the main dialect groupings, and thus of location, was based on the division advanced by Sjögren, the new factor was Castrén's more precise location of the Udora dialect.

While Castrén's study of *Zavoloč'je* replaced Sjögren's work on the same subject as the definitive source of reference, Sjögren's ideas continued to be employed for their information of the area that had received least attention in Castrén's writings: the area to the south of the Karelians and *Zavoloč'je*. Castrén himself referred to Sjögren's views in his lectures on the ethnology of the Altaic peoples. Castrén's theory of how the Vepsians, Äyrämöinen and Savakko Finns became recognized as part of the Baltic Finnic group showed how long Sjögren's ideas on the general history and linguistic affinity of this area were followed. While support for his interpretation of the chronology of the migration of the ancestors of the Häme Finns grew less, Sjögren's conclusions on the pattern of Jem' distribution continued to be cited for several decades. It was not until well into the second half of the nineteenth century that his views on the overall distribution of the southern Baltic peoples were put aside, although, even then, his work continued to serve as a source of information on the Votes and Izhors.²⁸

Arguably more enduring than the theoretical results of Sjögren's research, have been the methodologies he developed, consisting of the use of linguistics, onomastics and ethnography to supplement sparse documentary sources. The rapid advance in knowledge in the decades after Sjögren's expedition of 1824-1829 meant that the application of this three-part methodology as a composite by a single scholar would before long become impracticable, as the pursuit of historical linguistics and, to a lesser extent, of ethnography and onomastics began to evolve as separate and independent disciplines. Hence it was inevitable that the lines of research which made up Sjögren's three-part methodology would likewise follow this course and emerge as fully-fledged disciplines in their own right. The development of each discipline once it started was gradual and thus for some years several scholars continued to follow Sjögren's example in their application of his three-part methodology.

In Finland, the efficacy of these methods first found expression in the travel accounts of Castrén, which appeared in various Finnish newspapers. A typical letter written on his journey of 1841-1842 illustrates not only Castrén's exposition of the three-part methodology, but also reveals how consciously he was using Sjögren's approach as his starting point. Zachris Topelius's well-known lecture on the question of whether the Finns possessed a history throws further light on this question.

According to Topelius, the lack of documentary materials made it impossible to write an adequate history of the Finns until the vast resources of language, myth, poetry, and ethnography had been collected and investigated. 'Who could want to write the history of the Finns,' Topelius asked, 'without a comprehensive insight' into such problems as the relations of the Finns to the Slavic and Germanic peoples, a problem which Topelius thought could to some degree be solved by comparative linguistic studies.²⁹

The public response in the fourth phase of my periodisation to Sjögren's publications of the third phase must not be allowed to overshadow the dynamics of the fourth phase which were gradually bringing about a fundamental change in the course of Finno-Ugrian studies. Korhonen argues that the Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg was to remain the northern centre for Finno-Ugrian Studies until 1883 when the centre shifted to Helsinki following the foundation of the Finno-Ugrian Society.³⁰ It is certainly true that the Academy continued to provide a centre of activities which embraced in varying degrees Finno-Ugrian matters until that date and also afterwards. It is also true that through his personal position in the Academy Sjögren was able to advance such studies in a way that would not have been possible elsewhere. I have already referred to the Academy's support of Castrén and to the fact that in 1844 the Academy created an academic post for *inter alia* Finno-Ugrian studies (although it was discontinued after Sjögren's death in 1855). I would argue, however, that the centrality of the Academy to Finno-Ugrian studies in the years 1835-1860 was primarily the outcome of Sjögren's activities and that this centrality ceased soon thereafter which is why I see 1860 as the terminal point.

I believe there were three reasons for this: advances in science; modernisation; and the rise of nationalism. Where before there had been a happy convergence of Finnish and Russian interests, in the final phase of my periodisation, convergence changes into conflict. In my review of the impact of Sjögren's work, I have made the point that science was shifting from the polymath approach to narrower, deeper and more tightly focused research. Sjögren's own research after 1835 illustrates this clearly as the emphasis shifts noticeably from historically focused area studies to linguistic and ethnographic studies. His last twenty years as a scholar can be divided into two distinct periods: before and after 1844, the year when he was appointed Academician for Finno-Ugrian and Caucasian Linguistics and Ethnography.

The linguistic work for which he received the greatest international renown was on the Osset language which he had studied on a two-year expedition to the Caucasus in 1836-1838. The outcome of this work, Sjögren's Osset grammar and dictionary, was recognised as an outstanding linguistic production for which he was awarded the

Volney Prize of the Institut Français in 1846. His work as an ethnographer was recognised by his appointment as Director of the Academy's Ethnographic Museum in 1845. His academic work thereafter concentrated on the language and ethnography of the Livonians, in which area he also produced work that continues to be of documentary value. The trend towards scientific specialisation, however, is clear to see. In so far as Sjögren can be said to have had a successor in the Academy, Wiedemann, his field was designated simply as 'philology'.

Specialisation and diversification meant that in the next generation the active development of Finno-Ugrian studies would shift to countries with enough specialists to cover the range of new disciplines into which the broad subject areas were diversifying and where there was a political need — nationalism — for such studies. Thus one of Sjögren's contributions to Finno-Ugrian studies in the fourth phase of my periodisation was to ensure that the next generation received the facilities necessary for the process of discipline specialisation. By the late 1840s, the next generation of specialists was beginning to come together in Finland, Estonia and Hungary. At the same time, modernisation, economic growth and the development of social and educational institutions ensured that these emerging states could begin to provide the infrastructure necessary to sustain academic endeavour — institutions of advanced education, learned societies, libraries, scientific exploration. By 1850, Alexander's University had established its own chair of Finnish.

Above all, however, it was nationalism which shaped and guided events in the phase 1835-1860 and brought to an end the role of the Academy of Sciences as a centre for Finno-Ugrian Studies. In Finland, the early years of this period saw a transition from the cultural nationalism of Herder to the political nationalism of Hegel led by J.V. Snellman with its emphasis on the nation state and the importance of conducting its business in Finnish and of developing a 'Finnish culture'. While such a movement gave strong support to the training of a generation of specialists, its exclusivity ensured that those specialists had to be based in Finland. Conversely, those who practised such studies outside Finland ceased to be taken seriously. Towards the end of his life, even Sjögren became the object of vilification by men whose cause he had done so much to advance on the grounds that he lived and worked in St Petersburg.

The divergence of Finnish and Russian interests was sharpened by Russian nationalism which proved to be far more exclusive in nature than Finnish nationalism. Whereas Finnish nationalism had had in its early days to struggle against the authorities in Finland, in Russia so-called official nationalism was adopted by Tsar Nicholas I as the ideology by which Russia was to be governed. The amalgam of

autocracy, Orthodoxy and nationalism, official nationalism was built on a Slavophile concept of Russia as — to cite Vucinich — ‘a unique historical and cultural phenomenon’ which turned its back on Western values and introduced a series of measures enforced by censorship and other political measures to ensure that ‘Russians be saved from thoughts and ideals incompatible with the soul of Russia’.³⁰

The impact of official nationalism in Finland is well known and can with hindsight be seen to have strengthened the Finnish nationalist movement. Perhaps less well known is its impact on science in Russia. Because the Academy was an agency of the state and because the chief ideologue of official nationalism, S.S. Uvarov, combined the duties of President of the Academy with his post as Minister of National Education, it is easy to understand the constraints under which Sjögren and some of his colleagues had to work in the 1830s, 1840s and 1850s. As Minister, Uvarov introduced russification measures in secondary education in the Baltic States and Belarus as part of the policy to eradicate Western values in Russia’s borderlands. As President of the Academy, he ‘displayed an open distrust of scientific theory. He had, however, a healthy respect for applied science, and believed that the Academy was of importance as a repository of useful facts which could be called on by government agencies for help in solving urgent practical problems.’³¹

The dominance of Uvarov in the Academy is clear from numerous guarded comments in Sjögren’s diary. The ruling ideology also meant that there was for most of the final phase of my periodisation an erosive tension between the Academy’s motives for studying the non-Russian peoples of Russia and Sjögren’s motives. The earlier need to gather knowledge in order to develop human resources had been transformed into a need to manipulate people with the eventual aim of russifying them. The tension was exacerbated in Sjögren’s case, because several of the peoples with whom he was concerned inhabited the western borderlands, while others were along the southern frontier where russification was being fiercely implemented. In short, by the late 1840s Sjögren was living a double life which led on at least one occasion to his being investigated by the police. The effects of official nationalism and the diversification of area studies into discipline-based studies are, therefore, my principal criteria for seeing 1860 as the end of the Academy’s central role in Finno-Ugrian studies. But by then, the new disciplines were taking root elsewhere and in quite different intellectual and political environments.

How best can we characterise Sjögren’s part in this final phase? Perhaps the metaphor of a lightning conductor captures the essence of his role. Without Sjögren in St Petersburg during the difficult years of the reign of Nicholas I, speaking for and on behalf of young scholars in Finland and Estonia, it is likely that much of their work

— especially their essential fieldwork in Russia— would never have been possible; without Sjögren's involvement in the censorship and publication processes, it is possible that their works would not have been published in the form that they were.³² Perhaps it was this that Lönnrot had in mind when in his obituary of Sjögren he wrote: '/.../ with a great river before our eyes, we seldom remember the source from which it sprang, with bread before us we do not think of him who ploughed the earth or sowed the seed.'³³

References

- 1 Günter Johannes Stipa, *Finnisch-ugrische Sprachforschung von der Renaissance bis zum Neupositivismus*, Helsinki [= Suomalais-ugrilaisen seuran toimituksia, Vol. 206], 1990: 153-205.
- 2 Mikko Korhonen, *Finno-Ugrian Language Studies in Finland 1828-1918*, Helsinki [= The history of learning and science in Finland 1828-1918, Vol. 11], 1986: 28-50.
- 3 Liselotte Richter, *Leibnitz und sein Russlandbild*, Berlin, 1946: 76-87; Alexander Vucinich, *Science in Russia, A History to 1860*, London, 1965: 45-8.
- 4 Halle, 1771: 246-51, 292-317, 419-25, 437-90, 492-501. See Michael Branch, A.J. *Sjögren. Studies of the North* [= Suomalais-ugrilaisen seuran toimituksia, Vol. 152], Helsinki, 1973: 23-4.
- 5 'Discours' in *Acta Academiae Scientiarum Imperialis Petropolitanae*, Vol. I₂, 1780: 12-16.
- 6 *Acta Academiae Scientiarum Imperialis Petropolitanae*, Vol. II₁, 1780: 1-37.
- 7 Peter Simon Pallas, 'Réflexions sur les anciens travaux de mines qu'on trouve en Sibérie et sur leurs rapports avec ceux de Hongrie qui se distinguent des travaux Romains', *Acta Academiae Scientiarum Imperialis Petropolitanae*, Vol. II₂, 1784: 52-68.
- 8 Peter Simon Pallas, *Reise durch verschiedene Provinzen des Russischen Reichs*, St Petersburg, 1773, 1776
- 9 St Petersburg, 1776: 1-83
- 10 Ivan Lepechin, *Tagebuch der Reise durch verschiedene Provinzen des Russischen Reiches in den Jahren 1768 und 1769*, Altenburg, 1783: 15-21, 52-9, 121-3, 146-75, 200.