Johan Whelin and early Finno-Ugric studies in Sweden

The well-known politician, Bengt Skytte (1614-1683), had an extensive knowledge of languages as manifested in his posthumous manuscript *Sol præcipuarum linguarum subsolarium sive Lexicon polygloton*. In the 17th and 18th centuries, this manuscript was the source of two separate Swedish traditions of research into the kinship between Finnish and Hungarian. In 1733, barely 20 pages of Skytte's manuscript were discovered in the diocesan library of Linköping. A scholar, Johan Whelin, was assigned the task of investigating Szenczi Molnár's Hungarian dictionary, in order to find similarities between Hungarian and his own native Finnish. Whelin's study resulted in a list of some 500 words which, however, Setälä and Stipa viewed with contempt in their studies on Finno-Ugric research history. Another tradition allegedly started from Skytte's contacts with Olof Rudbeck the Elder, whose work on Finnish and Hungarian and, to some extent, also on Saami has been referenced by Hormia. Olof Rudbeck the Younger took over his father's research material, including a major part of Skytte's manuscript. The Finnish-Hungarian comparative work of the younger Rudbeck was for a long time well-esteemed, whereas few saw any worth in the work of Whelin. However, it has been overlooked that Whelin worked independently from other scholars and, consequently, the correct etymologies found in his list of words result from his own efforts. It should be noted that János Sajnovics quotes parts of Whelin's list in *Demonstratio*, alongside that of Rudbeck the Younger describing that of Whelin as a brilliant list of words ("luculentum vocabularium"). There were, clearly, research traditions as well as scholars, working on their own in those days, which makes it difficult to establish who the "founding fathers" of Finno-Ugric studies are.

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