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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	pt. 1. The making of a diplomat and orientalist -- pt. 2. 1789-1801 : revolution and turmoil -- pt. 3. Reading Egyptian : deciphering the Rosetta inscriptions -- pt. 4. The Napoleonic wars and restoration in Italy.
Sommario/riassunto	Johan David Åkerblad (1763–1819) contributed to the decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs and Demotic and is known as a predecessor of Jean-François Champollion. This intellectual biography offers a new and less heroic interpretation of the first reading of the Egyptian scripts. Åkerblad, an exceptional linguist, was a diplomat and orientalist who spent several decades living in the Ottoman Empire, France and Italy. Of humble birth, he was a supporter of the French Revolution – something that stymied his career. His life cannot be understood in a purely Swedish national framework, and this study firmly situates him as an international scholar. The book discusses European expansion in the Eastern Mediterranean during the tumultuous decades around the year 1800, and traces Åkerblad's momentous life in relation to the debates on 'orientalism,' the tradition of classical studies and the

history of science.

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