

# *Book Reviews*

A DESCRIPTIVE BIBIOGRAPHY OF THE WORKS OF EMANUEL  
SWEDENBORG (1688–1772)  
VOLUME 1

Swedenborg Society, London ©2010

Edited and compiled by Norman Ryder, volume 1 of this work printed in 2011 is now available. 590pp. hardcover

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A review of the first volume of this extraordinary work can scarcely do justice to the signal importance of it; the least I can do is draw attention to it.

Norman Ryder begins the Introduction with “As I begin to introduce the new *Bibliography* to its potential users I must acknowledge our debt to the late James Hyde, the editor of the *Bibliography* published by the Swedenborg Society in 1906. If he had not compiled this groundbreaking work I cannot imagine how I or anyone else could tackle the preparation of what the Society is now publishing. Before Hyde’s day and since, others have produced checklists and catalogues of the works of Emanuel Swedenborg of which they knew; but none of these valuable sources of information can meet the definition of bibliography.” Then under “Purposes and uses of bibliography” and following a broad definition of the term (W. W. Greg, 1933),<sup>1</sup> he notes that bibliography “is more than a checklist of an author’s published works . . . Useful as such publications can be, my aim has been to compile what is better termed a *descriptive or analytical bibliography* including every work composed by Swedenborg, and every known edition in the language in which he wrote it and in the languages into which it has been translated.”

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<sup>1</sup> W. W. Greg, “The Function of Bibliography in Literary Criticism,” published in *Neophilologus*. 1933, pp. 233–234.

Essential introductory material is given under the following subheadings: The process of compilation; The reference system devised for the Bibliography; Modern publishing developments; The order in which the records of each work are arranged; The bibliographical descriptions provided in this Bibliography; Special problems in the descriptive information; Printers' ornaments; Index; Using the Bibliography; Principles of compilation of quasi-facsimile transcriptions of this work; The sequence in which each entry is set out; Acknowledgements. Two additional sections in the front matter include Lists of Abbreviations and A Glossary of Bibliographical Terms.

Then follow the first three of several Sections of this eventually multi-volume work: Section A: Swedenborg's Literary Corpus, 1700–1771 (pp. 1–24); Section B: Bibliographies of Swedenborg's Works (pp. 27–30); and Section C: Bibliographical Descriptions, 1700–1742 (33–539). In subsequent volumes, Section C will be completed, then the following sections will be published —Section D: Composite Editions, with cross-references; Section E: Biographical Material. a. Autobiography and b. Collections of Documents concerning Emanuel Swedenborg; Section F: Appendices. An Index will close out the set of volumes.

Section A comprises twenty-four pages in which are given the literary output of Swedenborg from 1700 to 1771. Each item, on its left, being given a reference number indicating year of publication and a number sequence of the output for that year; for example, "09/03" refers to a work either published in 1709, or if unpublished, the year in which Swedenborg began work on it, and "03" indicates that it is the third of the works authored in that year. Then is given "a short English title, and then a version of the title under which it was first composed or published, in Latin or Swedish . . . Notes are then given concerning each work, stating the place where it was first published, or (if unpublished in his lifetime) the place where the original extant MS is conserved. In cases of Swedenborg's works published by others before he died, the publishers are noted." Then in a column to the right of the text is given a cross reference to "James Hyde's Bibliography, Stanley Wainscott's supplement to it, or the catalogue of the Library of the Swedenborg Society" (p. 1). To have a brief view of all of Swedenborg's literary output in the space of fourteen pages is in itself a very valuable entity.

Section B includes bibliographic information on works published in 1897, 1906, 1967, 2000, and 2003; and on unpublished works, 1882 and 1921.

Section C, pages 33 to 539, covers the years 1700 to 1742, and gives full blown bibliographic information on the works given in Section A; it will continue in subsequent volumes for 1743 to 1771. Needless to say, the reader needs to read closely the material regarding the abbreviations used in constructing the identification code (for example, for “A New System of Reckoning which turns at 8”, 18/03/Sw O/3, D LASw 1910/1) given each entry in Section C, the section that is the heart of the work. As the reader may gather from the example given, the code carries a lot of information; our presumption is that with regular use, the user will become acquainted with it to avoid the need to refer back to the description in the Introduction.

This compilation of information represents an extraordinary accomplishment that should be treasured for generations. Volume I and those that will follow should be in the library of all Swedenborg scholars, and of college, university, and public libraries the world over.

## THE HIDDEN LEVELS OF THE MIND Swedenborg’s Theory of Consciousness

Douglas Taylor

Swedenborg Foundation Press, West Chester, Pennsylvania  
2011

ISBN: 9780877853404

Paperback, 90pp.

Price: \$12.95

Available at: <http://store.newchurch.org>, [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

In this small work of ninety pages Rev. Douglas Taylor brings clarity to the words “soul,” “mind,” and “body” in lucid terms that relate to our common experience of the life of the mind.

The author draws attention to the fact that Swedenborg uses the work “soul” in a number ways but selects the use that is most crucial to our humanity—the soul as “the spiritual organ that receives life inflowing

from the Lord” (p. 1). It is from this that we have the faculties of freedom and rationality: “the freedom to choose between good and evil,” and “the ability to evaluate everything in life in a spiritual light” (pp. 3, 4).

“Mind” on the other hand is where our life is consciously played out (both consciously and subconsciously) in our loving, thinking, and doing through the agency of our bodies. The relationship between these three—soul, mind, and body—is clearly illustrated in diagram 3 (p. 16) as a set of concentric circles, the innermost being the soul, the next, the mind (both external and internal), and the outer, the body.

Then follows a treatment of the natural mind with its sensory, middle natural, and rational levels. The first becomes “open” by means of sense experiences, the second by reflection on these whereby generalizations are formed—the “scientifics” of thought at all ages, from childhood ideas about life to the most sophisticated thinking in the natural and social sciences and the humanities. But the rational level can only become open first by knowledge from the Word—the Ten Commandments, for one example—then, and most importantly, by the inflow from the “internal mind” of good and truth, the Lord’s love and wisdom, by which we become truly enlightened. This is the way of regeneration that we tread when we hear the Lord knocking on the door of our internal mind, open it, and invite Him to enter our external natural mind

So chapters 3, 4 and 5 treat in some detail of the sensory, middle natural, and rational levels of the natural mind, while chapters 6, 7, and 8 treat of the path of regeneration—first of the rational level, then successively of the middle natural and sensory levels.

The book provides clear examples of the kinds of affection, thought, and action associated with each level, and shows how the Swedenborgian concepts of inflow or influx, and discrete degrees are crucial in all of them. In addition, line diagrams provide excellent support for the ideas discussed. Simplicity and clarity of expression characterize the whole work, which I highly recommend, not only for the general public, but also for parents and teachers in their roles in nurturing the development of the mind.

The volume also includes an essay by Rev. Dr. Reuben Bell titled “Swedenborg’s Mind” (pp. 91–100) that gives a survey of theories of “mind” from Plato (424–348 BCE) to Kant (1724–1804) providing the his-

torical context of Swedenborg's concepts. This survey could well be read first.

Closing the volume is the author's brief account (pp. 101–104) of the regeneration of the human mind as given in the internal sense of the creation story at the beginning of Genesis as expounded by Swedenborg in *Arcana Coelestia*.

Front matter includes a Preface and a short statement "About the Source Material." The volume has an index (pp. 107–109).

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