

I. Introduction.

Thomas S. Kuhn in his book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962) postulates that science has not developed in a neat linear fashion, one piece of data added to another. Instead Kuhn believes that science has developed by fits and starts as one scientific “paradigm” or “world view” has replaced another in a series of “scientific revolutions.”

A paradigm for Kuhn is a fundamental view of how the world works, a built in set of assumptions from which scientists interpret data. For example, the book of Genesis incorporates a scientific paradigm when it speaks of creation. This paradigm basically agrees with Ptolemaic geocentric astronomy although it incorporates a flat earth view. People who accepted the Ptolemaic paradigm which held sway for over a thousand years had no problem accepting the Genesis account of creation in that it fit the current scientific world view. But when Copernicus changed the scientific paradigm, and when this change had become nearly universally accepted, those who accepted the Genesis account as factual “divine revelation” found themselves with a real problem. Either they had to reject the divinely revealed “scientific” paradigm or they had to reject the Copernican paradigm.

In our own century we have seen a dramatic paradigm shift as the work of Einstein challenged the views of Newton who in turn had challenged some of what DesCartes had postulated. Swedenborg, the scientist, seems to be a Cartesian with some modifications. New Church men, now two steps removed from Swedenborg’s scientific paradigm, face the problems of these shifts. Does ether exist? Are there three natural atmospheres? Current genetic and evolutionary paradigms pose similar problems. Does a black father have a black son regardless of the mother’s genetic material (See DP 276:3)? Swedenborg’s genetic paradigm apparently said so. (I’m

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told¹ this piece of data was picked up by Swedenborg from Leibnitz, although I have not yet traced this piece of information to its source.)

The field of history has also undergone paradigm shifts since the giving of the Writings. Today when we say something is historically true, we generally assume it actually happened as recorded, whereas in the earlier paradigm the reader would have understood that the recorded events were "based on fact," but did not occur as literally described. Historical fiction was once acceptable history. Lack of awareness of this shift will greatly affect our understanding of a statement from Revelation claiming that something is historically true.

Anthropology has also changed its paradigm, now placing the beginnings of the human race in the millions of years rather than the four thousand or so of Bishop Usher, the accepted view of Swedenborg's day, if not Swedenborg himself. (Swedenborg in several places in his pre-Theological works refers to the age of the human race in terms of Usher's dating, but always with a mild question as to its validity. See also CL 186:5.) Dating the Most Ancient Church is now quite a different thing from what it once was. Archeology also has changed dramatically with real impact in this same area.

Many more examples of paradigm shifts in philosophy and other fields of learning between the eighteenth and twentieth century could be given, but the point seems established: there are such things as paradigms and they do affect the way we think.

The question arises, "Are there Divinely revealed paradigms, or will paradigms continue to shift? If so, how will these shifts affect our understanding of the 'authority' of Revelation which, as a concept, is a paradigm in its own right?"

The purpose of this paper is to outline several different paradigms held by Christians as to the infallibility of Revelation, and then to see how we in the New Church either wittingly or unwittingly have adopted or adapted these different paradigms in our approach to the Writings. In doing this we have caused schisms in the church, both by holding to our accepted paradigm, and also by failing to see how our own paradigm of

¹Dr. Thomas Andrews, University of Washington, personal communication.

revelation fits with paradigms of science, history, and philosophy. After tracing this development I intend to offer another paradigm expressing my own understanding of the nature of Divine Revelation, a paradigm which I believe is indicated by the Writings.

II. Kuhn's Thesis

Before turning to my central theme let me outline Kuhn's thesis in more detail. I have already noted how Kuhn defines a paradigm and have given some examples of paradigm shifts. I also noted that for Kuhn such shifts constitute "revolutions" in science.

What happens between revolutions? Kuhn calls the work of scientists in these interim periods "normal" science. Normal science devotes itself to following out the logical consequences of the paradigm, or noting and solving the "puzzles" which arise because of the paradigm. For example, after Ptolemy many, many astronomers using his geocentric paradigm proceeded to successfully "do" science, predicting eclipses and other astronomical events.

However, in the process of doing "normal" science, what Kuhn calls "anomalies" arise. For example, in the case of Ptolemaic astronomers, observers of the stars found them going in the wrong direction. If enough of these anomalies arise, some free thinker may decide that it is not the data but the paradigm which is wrong. A Copernicus comes along with a new theory to explain the facts. A revolution begins. In this particular case the Copernicans nearly lost the battle because people had no idea that the stars were as far away as they are, but eventually they did prevail.

But perhaps the "phlogiston" paradigm of Swedenborg's day gives a clearer illustration of the clash which can happen in paradigm shifts. Phlogiston was an element locked within combustible substances. When something was burnt this element was released, but when something was heated it was added to the heated material. So when one heated iron ore, phlogiston was added to the ore, producing iron (ore + phlogiston = iron). Today's paradigm is just the reverse. When an oxide like iron ore is heated in the presence of a reducing agent, oxygen is released leaving iron (iron ore = iron + oxygen). According to the phlogiston theory a candle put under a bell jar would go out because enough phlogiston was released in

the burning process to saturate the air and extinguish the flame. A mouse placed under such a bell jar would die from the phlogiston he inhaled. A normal scientist such as Priestly continued teaching the phlogiston theory, demonstrating it with the candle and mouse experiment.

However, once someone instead of putting a candle under the bell jar tried burning mercuric oxide. The mouse suddenly got very lively. It didn't die. An anomaly! He tried putting a burning splint under the jar. Bang! Another anomaly! Priestly died trying to explain these anomalies in terms of the phlogiston paradigm. It's hard for old men to make paradigm shifts. On the other hand, Lavoisier, instead of accepting the anomaly, changed the paradigm. Modern chemistry developed from his paradigm shift, with the explanation of combustion as a reaction with elemental oxygen playing a central role. Swedenborg never uses the term phlogiston as far as I know, but he did think of fire as an element.

A more recent example of a scientific revolution exists in the work of Einstein. After viewing anomalies in Newtonian physics he postulated the theory of relativity, and after the Michelson-Morley experiments with light were introduced, Einstein from his new paradigm believed that ether is superfluous. Many New Church men have a problem with this idea. The Writings have a lot to say about ether as one of the three natural atmospheres. Some priests have, like Priestly, rejected the paradigm shift; for them, there's not sufficient evidence to deny the existence of ether. Other paradigm shifts have caused similar reactions. For example, in an earlier generation, many New Church people defended spontaneous generation, and denied the basic thesis of evolution.

In summary, people keep practicing normal science until sufficient anomalies cause someone to try a paradigm shift. When this happens many good minds (usually older) cling to the old paradigm continuing to try to "puzzle solve" within this framework while others take up the new paradigm. The ensuing conflict produces a "revolution."

III. Philosophical paradigms

Many other fields of learning illustrate these same characteristics. Examples from the field of philosophy include the Pre-Socratic conflict

between Heraclitus and Parmenides over whether things are in constant flux, or are static, and the conflict between Plato and Aristotle over the nature of reality. These conflicts were based on different paradigms. When these paradigms are recognized their conflicts become understandable.

More philosophy also has many examples of paradigms. Descartes postulated a dualistic universe. Once postulated, "normal" philosophers would "puzzle solve" within the framework of this dualism. "How do the spiritual and the natural interact? Or do they?" asked the Empiricists and the Rationalists. Immanuel Kant, likening himself to Copernicus, with his own philosophical paradigm, caused a revolutionary reaction to the Cartesian puzzle. The "thing-in-itself" is unknowable save by "synthetic *a priori*" knowledge. He uses Euclidian Geometry as a model for this kind of knowledge and in process sets a new type of "idealism." W. T. Jones sees twentieth century philosophy as a series of efforts to break out of the Kantian paradigm. Einstein seems to agree with this assessment when he says, "I am convinced that the philosophers have had a harmful effect upon the progress of scientific thinking in removing certain fundamental concepts from the domain of empiricism, where they are under our control, to the intangible heights of the *a priori*" (Einstein 1974, 2).

Today many post modern philosophers say they are "beyond" philosophy. The paradigm of philosophical thinking itself, the "metaphysics" first postulated by Aristotle, is for them an outdated world view which needs to be replaced with new kinds of ideas. They have as far as they are concerned climbed out of Plato's cave and found a new world in the sun.

IV. Religious Paradigms

All religions have some kind of "world view" or paradigm. My concern in this paper, however, is only with Christianity, and specifically with Christian views of the concept of Revelation. What did the term "Word," or "Bible," mean for different groups of Christians? How did their understanding of what this term meant, their paradigm, affect their theology? I shall look at four different paradigms which I think are quite different and have profound effect on the varied theology of these groups. These are: the Roman Catholic paradigm, Martin Luther's and the early Reformation's paradigm, today's "fundamentalists" paradigm, and today's Protestant liberals' paradigm.

A. Roman Catholic

The Catholic paradigm comes out of the Jewish view of the Old Testament, and, like that view, developed over time into a legalistic interpretation of the letter. The Word or Bible is “inspired” Revelation which must serve as the basis of Catholic thought. But the Church is the mother of the Bible. She determined its canon, and it is her traditions which made such determinations possible. There is then another source for inspired revelation — the traditions of the church as incorporated in the writings of the great leaders of the church, men like Augustine and Aquinas, and especially the accepted statements of church councils which include statements by popes when made *ex cathedra*. Doctrine, which is the church’s understanding of Revelation, develops according to enlightened church leadership. Can tradition, developed doctrine, override the Bible? It certainly can explain it in such a way that some statements of the Bible become of no real effect. Augustine, for example, accepted an instantaneous creation, not one which happened in seven days. The developing nature of doctrine as a source of truth on a par with Revelation has made it possible for Catholics to accept paradigm shifts in science and other fields with far less dramatic conflicts than those which Protestants faced. Nevertheless, there are now a rising number of anomalies between Revelation and other accepted sources of “truth” which have caused some serious disturbance: For example, the Biblical role for women, particularly in relation to becoming priests, and the position that what God has created is good and so cannot be interfered with in relation to birth control and abortion.

B. Martin Luther.

In breaking with Catholicism, Luther expounded a different paradigm of Revelation. He accepted the Bible in its literal form as infallible truth which, if it was put in the hands of the common man, would serve to guide him in life. The priesthood of true believers could see the Word of God and follow it without benefit of the traditions of the church or the statements of popes and councils. The letter is infallible truth to be accepted as such. This paradigm is essentially that of all early Protestants. It worked well, although many anomalies or contra-

dictions in the letter of Revelation were seen. Should we or shouldn't we judge others? How do we reconcile the two different accounts of creation found in Genesis 1 and 2? Can God know all and we still be free? Is God one or three?, and so on. "Normal" theology faced these contradictions in a "puzzle solving" fashion, relegating many of them to unsolvable mysteries. But what happens when you get too many mysteries? Especially when these mysteries become issues about the infallibility of the letter itself, that is when other sources of "fact" conflict with the concept of an infallible letter?

For example, the Bible is based on the Ptolemaic paradigm. The break with that paradigm by scientists caused many anomalies to be seen. How do you explain creation in seven days, and the sun standing still? Genetics challenged the virgin birth. Textual criticism caused many questions as to the nature of what the letter said. "Higher" criticism raised doubts as to content, postulating that much of what was taken before as literally true was only myth; for example, the stories about the birth of the Lord.

C. Fundamentalist

"Normal" theologians responded to these challenges in the same manner as Priestly responded to Lavoisier. Since the letter is infallible the new set of data produced by the paradigm shift must be wrong. Scientists keep changing their minds all the time. Revelation will not change, and eventually those misguided scientists will come to see that the Bible was right all along. Creationism is an example of the fundamentalist defense of the infallibility of the letter. The work of Bishop Usher illustrates how "normal" theologians "puzzle solved" in an earlier age. Fundamentalists are committed to the infallibility of Revelation. Any paradigm shift that conflicts with this letter must be rejected.

D. Liberal Protestant

For many Protestants, as the paradigm shifts of other fields of learning went further and further away from the letter of Scripture there was a paradigm crisis which forced a new paradigm: "liberal" Protestantism.

The following statement on Methodists' view of the Bible illustrates this paradigm: "Methodists look upon the Bible as a library of inspired books containing the progressive revelation of God. They believe in the 'open Bible' and encourage the individual to read it for himself, leaving him free to make his own interpretation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit." (*Religions of America*, p. 179)

This paradigm allows some to say the inspiration of the Bible and that of Shakespeare are on a par. Since individuals can be inspired we need to look at this later inspiration as an ongoing set of revelations from God. Where conflicts arise we must trust our own common sense to see what is right. The danger, of course, of this paradigm is that it tends to make God in the image of man rather than the reverse. We determine what is truth.

V. New Church paradigms concerning the inspiration of the Writings

Early New Churchmen came from Protestant backgrounds. They were delighted to find that the letter of the Bible could once again be accepted as the infallible Word of God, although not in its literal but in its internal, or spiritual, sense. The Writings themselves were equally accepted as infallible in their letter, but an infallibility that needed no "internal" sense. They were clear new doctrine fresh from heaven. For many they were Divine revelation. They were the Heavenly Doctrines, direct, clear, plain, perfect truth. These Heavenly Doctrines offered a new form of fundamentalism.

However, as scientific paradigms shifted beyond that in which the Writings were couched, anomalies with this early form of fundamentalism began to arise. As noted earlier the science of the Writings is based on the Cartesian paradigm. This paradigm doesn't have many problems with the Newtonian paradigm. However, with the change to the paradigm of Einstein's relativity and with changes in our knowledge of astronomy and genetics, anomalies have appeared. If ether is superfluous are there three atmospheres? Why do the Writings, if they are infallible in the letter, claim that black fathers always have black children even if the mother is white? Is there life on the moon? These and other questions inevitably arise.

For some New Church men there was a paradigm crisis. Out of this crisis three paradigms concerning the nature of the Writings themselves

have arisen answering roughly to the three current Christian views of the Bible already outlined. These are : 1. The “liberal” paradigm, 2. The Fundamentalist paradigm, and 3. The “Catholic” paradigm, which places developing doctrine on a par with Revelation. I will briefly address each of these views.

1. The “liberal” paradigm

One of the earliest anomalies to those who later espoused the liberal view comes from the latter half of *Conjugial Love*. How could the teachings there be the inspired Word of God? Are we not to take the “spirit” of the Writings rather than those things which are offensive to our sensibilities? How could Swedenborg advocate breaking the then established law as regards divorce (manifest obscenity as a cause was illegal) and the taking of a mistress (see CL 468)? We must recognize that although the Writings are inspired, they are not infallible in the letter any more than is the Bible. Shakespeare, Swedenborg and the Bible are not discretely different as to the nature of their respective inspirations. With other anomalies this position rejected more and more of the letter of the Writings, trusting more and more on the “growing” enlightenment of the people of the church. It ignored “plain” teachings in favor of “experience.” Life on the moon is impossible, so the Writings are wrong in this respect. Women ought to be priests if they wish to be. Homosexuality as a condemned act is merely a product of the culture, not a Divine command. This paradigm complements the “liberal” Protestant view. It tends to stress good, or love, as opposed to the truth or doctrine. The Writings are “inspired” but so are other works. The strongest “liberals” seem to be in the General Convention.

2. The “fundamentalist” position

This view holds that there are not sufficient anomalies to cause one to worry. If we approach the Writings with an affirmative spirit we need not fear the attacks of those who use anomalies to cause doubts. The letter of the Writings is the doctrine of genuine truth, the Heavenly Doctrine, which is the internal sense, or spiritual sense, of the Word, and as such is infallible as to its literal sense. We have in the

Writings a "Divine science" revealed by the Lord through Swedenborg. This means there are three atmospheres including ether. To doubt this fact or any other "facts" of the Writings, is to reject the Heavenly Doctrines. There is life on the moon. It is our fault that we cannot accept its reality as fact without the evidence of the senses. The virgin birth is essential to our belief in the glorification; it is true whatever a new genetic paradigm might claim. Reproduction is always by seeds; spontaneous generation as addressed in *Divine Love and Wisdom* 341 (which has dust becoming insects upon being stirred) happens; and so on.

In an earlier age this thesis embraced the arboreal theory of creation and swallows hibernating under the ocean as well as other scientific "facts" recorded in the pre-Theological works. (See *The Worship and Love of God* and *Index Biblicus* for these theories.)

The stronger "fundamentalists" seem to be in the General Church.

3. The "catholic" or developing doctrine on a par with Revelation paradigm

This view holds that the Writings are the Word "without reserve and difference." The Writings state that there is an internal, or spiritual sense,² to the Word which can be seen by enlightened (regenerate?) men while studying the Word. This includes the Writings. Priests holding to this paradigm will take the doctrine revealed *to* the church and develop upon it a doctrine *of* the church which will, as the test of time prevails, take equal standing with Revelation itself. The reason this works is because the Holy Spirit leads them to see what is true, and there is but one truth. Anomalies in the sense of the letter will arise because the letter of the Writings is as subject to error as the letter of the Old and New Testaments. The Writings then are a Third Testament which can be understood properly only by a growing tradition called the "doctrine of the church." We should discard the mere letter of the Writings and instead look for the spiritual sense within it. For example, the sequence of the *Earths in the Universe* should be viewed from its regenerative sense, not as a series of Divinely revealed facts,

²There seems to be little difference between these terms, in this position.

which may or may not be correct. In time we will come to see this series better as enlightenment grows. Facts about the English or the Africans, or the roles of men and women are dated. In ten thousand years who will care about these facts? Their internal sense will by then be opened.

The strongest advocates of this paradigm seem to be in the Nova Hierosolyma.

VI. An alternate Paradigm as to the nature of the Writings³

The Writings are the Word and as such have a letter, but this letter is no more the same as that of the Old and New Testaments than are the letters of these two Testaments when compared to each other.

Not enough attention has been paid to the differences between the Testaments. Many looking at the "Word" see a continuous series from Genesis to Revelation. Didn't Swedenborg treat the "first" (*Arcana Coelestia* exposition of Genesis and Exodus) and "last" (*Apocalypse Revealed*) books of the series as a way of illustrating this point? I think not! Partly because of the fundamentalist paradigm and partly because they are published as one book, the Old and New Testaments are usually treated as very much the same. I don't believe this is the case. They are not simply in different languages, geared to a different culture, but they are different as to the way Divine truth is presented.

Bishop George DeCharms (1978) in looking at the four Gospels recognized something of a difference between the way they treat the glorification and the way it is done in the Old Testament. But I would suggest that the difference is far greater. The Writings state that the New Testament, unlike the Old, teaches "interior things" which concern the internal man.⁴

I see the Lord on earth showing that the Old Testament treated directly of His life. It is a parable which was opened or "elevated" to the level of explanation existing in the New Testament by the Lord's life on earth. I will say more about this later, but for now my point is that the Writings themselves are different in form from past Revelation, but similar in spirit.

³This is the paradigm I prefer.

⁴A.C. 3900: 8. cf. A.E. 324e: 24.

They continue the "elevation" of truth in the Testaments by opening them to their own level, a level which presents the glorified Divine Human to us as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. (I have put the word elevation in quotes because I don't wish to get bogged down here with an argument as to what the term means. Some hold this elevation to be in terms of the sequential degrees of the natural mind, and so on a continuous mental level. I don't.)

The letter of the Writings contains both the internal sense of past forms of Revelation and the doctrine of genuine truth, but to equate this letter solely with these two things to me is a mistake. The Writings are the Word. As such they contain more than just the internal sense and the doctrine of genuine truth. For example, they contain spiritual representations as well as things which are properly called "fallacies." It is this last group of things which I believe cause problems.

A fallacy is a piece of sense datum, a thing limited by time and space. It is usually described as a fallacy of the senses. I would describe it as a thing described in terms of "natural light." Fallacies in themselves are not eternal truths, *and if they are embraced as such they become falsities*. For example, it is a fallacy of the senses that life is only a property of the body. If we embrace this fallacy as reality we turn it into a falsity.

But fallacies are essential to life on earth. We cannot live apart from them. For example, we must just as surely live with sunrise and sunset (fallacies according to accepted scientific paradigms) as we live with the appearance that life is a property of the physical body, and cannot survive death.

The Writings, however, also teach of a doctrine of genuine truth which does not partake of fallacies; it is an *accommodation* of infinite truth to spiritual beings. It is not something couched in "natural light," but exists in spiritual light. We can penetrate deeper into its singulars but as a universal it is not limited in the same way as fallacies are. It must therefore be those essentials of the Word which are not couched in a time-space continuum. It will be describable in words but the ideas to which the words correspond will be beyond time and space. The Old Testament contained the doctrine of genuine truth in a limited fashion with much of it needing the key of correspondences to be released from things of "natural light" to the first level of spiritual accommodation. The New Testament

elevated the things of the Old Testament to its own level of fallacies. It, too, contained the doctrine of genuine truth, and much of it also needed the key of correspondences to open its fallacies to the level of the doctrine of genuine truth. The Writings have opened both the Old and New Testaments to their own level. But they also contain fallacies which are not genuine truths. To become one with genuine truth the fallacies must be removed so that the accommodation becomes clear.

Fallacies are in essence wrong. When the essence is seen more clearly (which seems to happen with paradigm shifts) the fallacy now exposed must be discarded, not embraced lest falsity follows. The New Church man must be prepared to recognize fallacies in Revelation and to discard them. Nevertheless, until they are exposed by varied paradigm shifts we should accept them in a spirit of affirmation. The teaching concerning the affirmative principle is here most important (see AC 2567:3). For me, unless we see a fallacy as a fallacy we should accept it as an accommodation, that is as a part of the spiritual truth found in the Writings. Still, in this paradigm it is important to recognize the existence of fallacies, and to seek them lest we unwittingly embrace a falsity. Also, we need to recognize that these kinds of fallacies are proper to all forms of revelation, although they take different forms.

There are five kinds of fallacies which we must consider in trying to see the doctrine of genuine truth in the Word in all three of its forms. These are: (a) the changing nature of the Lord in Revelation; (b) the culture of the people to whom the Revelation was first addressed, including its scientific, philosophic, and historical paradigms; (c) the mind of the Revelator through whom the Revelation was delivered; (d) the language in which the Revelation was given; and (e) the mechanics whereby the Revelation was recorded and transmitted.

These five kinds of fallacies are the necessary means which the Lord has used in His Word to speak to us. He could not have addressed anyone without them. They are as essential to Revelation as is the fallacy of sunrise and sunset to life on earth, but if they are taken as genuine truth, falsity will be the result. (See. AE 781 and AC 9011:3.)

I will conclude with some illustrations of each kind of fallacy listed taking them in reverse order.

1. The mechanics whereby the Revelation was recorded and transmitted.

Today we are familiar with textural criticism. Which manuscripts are valid and why? Revelation has been transmitted with great care, but errors in different texts do occur. It is the part of a rational man to see that such errors are finite not divine. As such they arise not because the Lord has magically introduced them, but because time and space considerations cannot avoid them. This is true of the Writings as well. Take the *Athanasian Creed* as an example. We don't have any verified manuscript of this work. To base doctrine on it therefore becomes somewhat suspect. If we don't recognize this fact and use this work as a base for doctrine we may well be embracing a fallacy which may well become a falsity.

Many other examples of slips of the pen, printers errors, and the like could be offered, but the point need not be belabored. There are these kinds of fallacies. Of course the fundamentalist would deny that statement, assuring us that Divine Providence is responsible for them, and perhaps claiming the they are there to test our faith in the infallibility of the letter. On the other hand the New Church "catholic" position might look to the internal sense of such slips. Neither would accept them as mere fallacies.

2. The language in which the Revelation was given.

We all know that Revelation has been given in three different languages and that there was a Divine purpose in this fact. We also know that language limits ideas. People think differently in different languages. The genius of the Germans rests on their common language. It is not surprising then that certain ideas are better expressed in different languages. The Lord's purpose in talking to us in Hebrew, Greek and Latin varies with the languages themselves. Any translator knows how limited a reader of Revelation is if he relies on a translation. He also knows how limited an amateur translator is when he professes to understand a different language simply by dictionary definitions of words, a so called literal translation, which thinks in the target language rather than the source language. Both these aspects of the language of Revelation illustrate the finiteness of the language, the time and space limits which it imposes on our understanding, the

fallacies it introduces. We must remember that the language of heaven transcends earthly language, even as we recognize that there is no other way in which the Lord can speak to us outside of those used here on earth. Too great a focus on a single word may well emphasize a fallacy which if embraced will become a falsity. The word "solemn" as in a "solemn betrothal" instead of a ritual of betrothal or a formal engagement is an example of this kind of fallacy when based on literalistic translation.

3. The mind of the Revelator through whom the Revelation was delivered.

It would have been impossible for the Lord in giving truth through Moses to use other than the then accepted paradigm concerning creation. It would have been equally impossible for the Lord to do otherwise with Swedenborg. We necessarily hear the Lord in our own finite way. The wonder of Revelation is that the Lord has been able to use the minds of revelators in such a fashion as to present Divine truth in perfect form. Although the finite limit of the mind of the revelator was necessary, nevertheless the accommodation was complete. Why? Because the Lord used the things of time and space to clothe Himself. The Word is in the human form, the Divine Human form, in the same way that my physical body gives form to my spirit. Although my body has flaws it is quite capable of reflecting my spirit. So the Lord used the ideas in the minds of revelators as well as the other fallacies listed to clothe His spirit. The ideas of the black father always having a black son, the existence of ether, and spontaneous generation are to me examples of these kinds of fallacies.

4. The culture of the people to whom the Revelation was first addressed including its scientific, philosophic, and historical paradigms.

For a book to sell it must have an accepting public. For Revelation to last it too must have an accepting public. People must see that the Word applies to them, to their times. An example of this principle is found in the story of Noah as told by Moses. It is noted that Moses changed the story to include animal sacrifice. Why? Because the Hebrew people needed it. It seems clear that the Writings are addressed

to eighteenth century aristocratic culture. Statements concerning the things women should do is for me an example of this point. Others are perhaps less controversial such as a statement that it is impossible for someone in Pennsylvania to be affected by the wrath of the king of Persia (TCR 515), operation "desert storm" notwithstanding. When we accept these illustrations as matters of Divine truth rather than the illustrations from eighteenth century culture which they are, we embrace fallacies.

5. The changing nature of the Lord in Revelation.

This last point is probably the most important. Over time the way the Lord has been visible to us has changed. Until the advent He could not be with us visibly (TCR 786). He was only present by means of His chosen representatives, both people and things. Revelation in the Old Testament was therefore giving clothing to a different Divine form than it was after the advent. It gave form to the Representative Human, the Human Divine. The New Testament pictures the Lord on earth. His body is His form. But, of course, it is merely a symbol of the Lord. Upon resurrection the Lord transcended this body. The Significant Human of the New Testament was replaced with the full revelation of the Divine Human in heaven which is the nature of the Lord today. These three forms of the Lord are the forms expressed in each of the three Revelations we have today. As to form, then, they must be different — one representative, one significant, and one correspondent. If we do not recognize these differences in Revelation itself, differences caused by the changing nature of the Lord in time and space, we will again embrace fallacy and enter into falsity.

A statement from the *Word Explained* illustrates this changing nature of the Lord.

Things which are representative, such as the types of the Old Testament, ceased when God Messiah came; and things which are significant, such as the symbols (of the New Testament), will also cease when man is introduced into the kingdom of God Messiah. The types of the Old Testament were REPRESENTATIVE, while the symbols of the New Testament were SIGNIFICA-

TIVE, these being then applied to man, that is the spiritual man, more interiorly and inmostly. Afterwards, they also will cease, in consequence of the coming of the effigy whose image they are, etc. etc. (WE 5060. See WE 3956, 6519, 8229, 5049; *Coronis* 51; and DLW 233 *et seq.*)

VI. Conclusion

In this paper I have tried to demonstrate the reality of various kinds of paradigms and how they affect our thinking. I believe there are specific paradigms concerning our understanding of what we mean when we use the term Revelation. It is not enough to agree that Revelation is “God speaking to man.” All the above religious paradigms could accept that definition. How does God speak, and how perfectly does He do it, are necessary follow-up questions which begin to illustrate what paradigm you are in.

There is a teaching that the Church will grow only as it rejects the falsities of the former faith. I believe that unwittingly many of us have failed to do this in regards our approach to the Writings. Whether the paradigm I have offered as an alternative is an acceptable one, to me is not as important as our rejection of past paradigms, of what I see as falsities of the former faith.

Early in this paper I noted that the Catholic church accepted the paradigm of the Jewish church, a falsity of the former faith. They also accepted much of the Jewish concept of government which acceptance I believe is very closely related to the issue of one’s accepted paradigm of Revelation. The Lord openly leads, or governs, by means of His Word. It is not surprising, then, that our form of government reflects our accepted paradigm. The New Church must avoid adopting paradigms which are in fact based on falsities of the former faith. □

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THE NEW PHILOSOPHY, January-June 1991

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