

is evident from the signification of 'the voice of a miserable cry,' as being what is lamentable; for in the original language this is expressed by a term which means 'a cry,' and 'affection,' and also 'misery,' thus which means 'a miserable cry.'¹⁸

The fact that Swedenborg used a bilingual Bible, the Van der Hooght—Schmidius Bible while working on the *Arcana Coelestia*, is indicative of his approach to the Hebrew. He did not work from the Hebrew text alone. A comparison of the Latin of the *Arcana Coelestia* with the Schmidius version in the 1740 Bible leaves little doubt as to what the *Arcana* translation was based on. But neither did Swedenborg work from the Latin version alone. That he chose to work from the bilingual Bible when he had the same Latin translation available by itself is some indication. The examples given above demonstrate some of the ways in which Swedenborg revised the translation from his own knowledge of Hebrew.

Swedenborg's own copy of the Van der Hooght—Schmidius Bible is, then, of valuable assistance in discovering what lies behind the Latin renderings found in the theological works. From it we learn that Genesis and Exodus were not "translated directly from the originals" while on the other hand there are interpretations of the Hebrew inserted by Swedenborg himself.

DREAMS

ALFRED ACTON II

From ancient times men have sought explanations for their dreams. Both Pharaoh of Egypt and Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon clearly accepted the premise that future events were predicted in their dreams, events which a skilled interpreter could readily predict. Nor was belief in revelation by means of dreams confined to pagan kings. Hebrew tradition also accepted God's ability to speak to His chosen people in dreams. As the book of Numbers attests: "If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream" (Num. 12: 6). Also in New Testament times dreams play an instructive role. The wise men were warned in a dream not to return unto Herod. Joseph was thrice warned in dreams:

¹⁷ AC 3271.

¹⁸ AC 10457.

first to retain Mary as his wife, second to flee into Egypt and finally to return to Nazareth—while the wife of Pilate was troubled by her dreams the night prior to Pilate's turning Jesus over to the Jews for crucifixion. Clearly the ancient mind saw dreams as predictions of God's will. Yet it is only in the pages of the New Word that the sources of such ancient beliefs are revealed. There we learn that in the days of the Most Ancient Church men received revelation by means of dreams. In those days men enjoyed open contact with angels, but also were instructed by perceptions applied to the ultimates supplied through their dreams. Dreams for them were of great beauty, arising from a direct influx of the Lord's love which clothed itself in the ultimates of their external memories and so presented to them in sleep a purely correspondential vision of God and Heaven. Such revelation, we are told, was written down at the fall of the Most Ancient Church in story form in the ancient Word, but also continued with chosen revelators. In the Ancient Church, the knowledge of correspondences was called the knowledge of knowledges, and it was through this knowledge that ancient wise men were able to interpret dreams inflowing from God as pictures of His will. In time, as men fell into more and more sensual life, the beauty of God presented in dreams dimmed while men sought merely external predictions in answers to their dreams. So Pharaoh was satisfied that his dream predicted a famine in his land (Gen. 41: 25-37). To him, the spiritual essence of his dream was valueless while the natural prophecy was his goal.

Still in Pharaoh's day, as in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, God did at times predict the course of future events by means of dreams, dreams which even today when seen spiritually have predictive value to men of the Lord's church on earth. But today we know that written Revelation is the primary expression of God's will to men. Do we today still expect prophecy of future events by means of our dreams? If not, are all dreams to be classed as Revelation?

In the New Word, we find answers to these and other questions we might have concerning our dreams. There we learn of different classifications of dreams as well as their different purposes and origins. There are in fact four different classes of dreams, each springing from a different origin and each having different effects on men. The first of these classes of dreams is called pro-

phetic dreams. These dreams come directly from the Lord who flows through the heavens organizing representative clothing for His truth from the memories of angels who in turn induce corresponding forms in the external memory of the dreamer. Such dreams are Divine truth accommodated to men and are found today written in the Word. Dreams of this class ceased with the Lord's coming, in that once He assumed the Divine natural He no longer needed the ultimates of dreams to present Himself to men. Yet, there are even today some forms of predictive dreams, dreams induced from heaven in accord with the sphere of those about whom the prediction is made. Angels cannot tell the future as such, but they can understand the present state of an individual and so see future results from that state should the individual choose to change his state. So a dream, predicting the death of an individual, can be induced by the spirits associating with a man and that individual. Further, the spirit of a man still living can at times induce a dream upon another, either directly or by means of angels in association with both. So-called telepathic dreams are caused in this manner. Note here the origin of dreams. They are caused by an influx from the spiritual world into the external memory of a man while that man is in a state of sleep. Dreams, then, give us a fore-taste of the sight we will enjoy in the other world. Not because that world is a dream world, but because that world also rests on the external memory for its space-time clothing. Due to this fact, the space-time relationships of heaven govern our dreams, not the ticking of the clock. Of course, these two relationships are usually concordant, but at times we can in dream travel beyond the bonds of space limits and at speed unmeasured by our time continuum.

The second class of dreams is instructive dreams. These dreams are like those which were enjoyed in the Most Ancient Church. They are sweet dreams inspired by angels themselves. Although these dreams probably still exist today, they are also probably quite rare. How often are men in a state of good, capable of receiving the beauty of heaven in a direct manner? How many of us are ready to perceive the correspondences involved in the ultimates of our dreams, and so receive instruction from heaven? Yet, we know that men can return to a state like unto that of the Most Ancient Church, and that the way for open communion with angels is not destroyed but merely closed.

Still another class of dreams are called fantastic dreams. These dreams are described as arising from another origin than that of spirits and angels, which origin seems to be the state of the body at the time of the dream. A man whose body is diseased, or who has affected his system with chemicals or alcohol, or who has overeaten, can by this state of the body cause a twisted form of influx from the spirits with him and so dream of fantastic things which have no real value. Nightmares often come from this origin, although not always.

A final class of dreams which is by far the most common type experienced by men today is described as significative dreams which are induced by the spirits near a man. It seems to be this type of dream which Swedenborg spoke of when he answered a question posed him by a Mr. Robsahm as to whether it was of value to pay attention to our dreams. Swedenborg answered:

That the Lord no longer at the present day makes Revelation by dreams; but that nevertheless, it may happen that one who understands correspondences may derive advantage from his dreams; just as a person who is awake may examine his own state by comparing his own will with God's Commandments. [Tafel, *Documents*, vol. I, p. 42.]

Note that Swedenborg here equates wakeful self examination with an understanding of dreams. If dreams are in fact induced by the spirits with whom we are in association, and if that association is caused by our loves, by understanding the dreams we may understand what spirits induced them and so find exposed the loves within us that have invited those spirits. Yet, we should carefully note that nothing done in a dream is made accountable to a man. Man is not spiritually responsible for what he dreams or for what he does in his dreams. The spirits around him may well come from his inherited evil, not his proper loves. We cannot, therefore, hold ourselves accountable for loves exposed by dreams. The Lord does not allow us to see evils in ourselves for the purpose of condemning ourselves. His purpose is to let us see and shun our hereditary make-up in favor of His heavenly proprium.

Another aspect of this most common form of dreams must be considered. We are taught that sleep is given to man to restore both his mind and his body. Further, we are forcibly taught how the Lord protects man in sleep, fiercely punishing evil spirits who seek his harm in this state. Even as the body in sleep is rejuvenated, so dreams seem to be used to restore the mind. We learn from experiments with dreams that if a man is deprived of their value, he will begin to see visions when awake. If kept from

dreaming long enough he will even lose his sanity. From this fact, it seems probable that dreams are the method used by angels to restore man's mind to equilibrium so that he can face the evils of his conscious life and still remain free. It seems that it is because of this restorative quality in dreams that the Lord so jealously guards men in sleep. They would lose spiritual freedom without such protection.

Now if angels are in fact ordering the minds of men by means of dreams, if they are in fact inducing dreams which will expose certain evils as in the case of bad dreams, and will implant remains of good as in sweet dreams, can we not by understanding our dreams see how our mind is being ordered and so better understand our mind itself? Such seems to be the thrust of present dream research. Such also seems to be a proper avenue for New Church men to follow in self examination. Swedenborg himself tried to analyse his dreams in an effort to see his spiritual state. We can properly do the same. Note also that the spirits with a man can induce sorrow in dreams even though those spirits be good. Swedenborg had several examples of this fact clearly illustrated to him. Because he was in both worlds, he could talk to the spirits who had induced a dream and see how the spirit's state or conversation corresponded to the visual representations of his dream. So he saw his father drowning in a dream in representation of a conversation between certain angels. Although Swedenborg sorrowed at the dream, its origin was from heaven and it merely represented an angelic conversation. Such may also be the origin of certain sad dreams, including nightmares, which men experience today.

A final value in dreams for men today is also hinted at in the New Word. Because dreams are induced by the spirits in association with a man, it is quite probable that a loved one who is in the other world may be present with a person on earth by means of their dreams. Even as a man in deep thought can be seen in heaven, though he be living on earth, so a spirit may be present in a dream. This hypothesis is somewhat implied by the case of the king of Denmark who, although he was an inhabitant of the spiritual world, told Swedenborg that he was unable to spend time with him as he was going to be with his wife who was still dwelling on earth.

So we see that although our dreams are no longer dreams of revelation, they are still instructive and comforting. Dreams have been ordained to the human experience both as a foretaste of spirit-

ual life and as a means for establishing with man that equilibrium of mind necessary to face the influx of hell. If we attend to our dreams, we may well be able to understand the nature of our inheritance and so better see those evils we seek to fight. Let us then remember the value of dreams, as we seek guidance from God's Word to order our steps on His heavenly path.

COMMUNICATIONS

Editor,

Secretly I read *THE NEW PHILOSOPHY* and other New Church publications looking for illumination that will open new horizons. Erik E. Sandström's "From Enoch's Codex to the Ancient Word" (April-June, 1976, pp. 385-398) was one of those rare pieces that did just that. Not only did he tell me much that I didn't know, but from this perspective a lot of other things become clearer. A gem. My compliments to him.

Ukiah, Ca.

WILSON VAN DUSEN

To the Editor of *THE NEW PHILOSOPHY*:

In the article entitled "Language, Thought and Culture" that appeared in your last number, Miss Sandström has made a worthy contribution to linguistic study looking to a *new philosophy* of language. She has also lucidly demonstrated the futility of nailing great thinkers into *-ism* boxes.

One definition of "relativism" is: "The theory that all truth is relative to the individual and to the time and place in which he acts" (AHD). As applied to language, the relativistic view would seek to emphasize the individual character of all language communities with minimal regard for underlying consistencies amongst them.

Since the human species is born into total ignorance it is dependent on society for the tools of expression and communication. Competence in language use (Whorf: "the how of understanding")—even in the Chomskian sense—is an acquisition of the rational mind, thus very much a product of environment and culture. But the *ability* to acquire it (Whorf: "the why of understanding") is truly a human characteristic, identical with the ability to speak spiritual language that is inmosty inherent in all without instruction.

Language is one of the elements of the cultural framework that forms the natural mind; but when and if the spiritual mind is opened, this framework is relegated a subservient role. Then cultural differences no longer separate, but only distinguish varieties of life and thought. It is therefore no coincidence that the "lip" in Gen. XI: 1 (i.e. "language") signifies *doctrine*. In a most vital sense, only those in spiritual charity "speak the same language"—even if their mother tongues differ; while those not in that charity speak different languages, even if their mother tongues are the same.

What marks human language as distinct is its function of signifying realities by means of vocal (or gestural) symbols. Insofar as these symbols are *natural* ones, there is universality; insofar as they deviate from genuine correspondences, diversity arises. If mankind had remained in the order of creation, perhaps language on this planet would have developed as the universal medium it essentially is.

Future research will no doubt unearth in this world's language labyrinth many hitherto unsuspected relics of a primordial "natural" speech from which all languages evolved.

Miss Sandström's last quote from Whorf mentioning "unsuspected realms of fact" is very apt indeed.

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