

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES

1996 REPORT TO THE BOARD OF THE ACADEMY OF THE NEW CHURCH

Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) is known for his claim to a continuous experience of the afterlife while still in the world. From the time that he first began having spiritual experiences he would write down brief, often rather hasty paragraphs in learned but informal NeoLatin on what he had seen and heard in the world beyond. By the end of his life Swedenborg had written over 6000 such paragraphs, to which he added an index almost half as large as the work itself.

These paragraphs, left in manuscript form at the time of Swedenborg's death, Dr. J.F.I. Tafel first edited and published in four volumes in 1844 under the title *Diarium Spirituale* (Spiritual Diary). Tafel's reading, though surprisingly accurate for the speed at which he worked, left many problems in the text, not the least of which were hundreds of paragraphs which Tafel did not realize were meant as part of the work. Tafel also had difficulty with Swedenborg's Swedish. Although Tafel's edition lapsed out of print many years ago, no edition has replaced it until now.

Rev. Dr. J. Durban Odhner has produced an entirely new, careful reading. Odhner's edition will comprise 4 volumes of text, with another 2 volumes devoted to the author's index. 5 of these 6 Latin volumes are now available. Dr. Odhner is also well underway with an English translation of the work, although none of it has been published to date.

In addition to a host of new readings, Dr. Odhner's new Latin edition of *Experientiae Spirituales* (*Spiritual Experiences*) incorporates two major discoveries.

The Name of the Work

While the previous editor simply made up a title for this apparently untitled work (*The Spiritual Diary*), Dr. Odhner's research uncovered evidence that Swedenborg did have a title for the work: he called it *Experientiae Spirituales* or *Spiritual Experiences*.

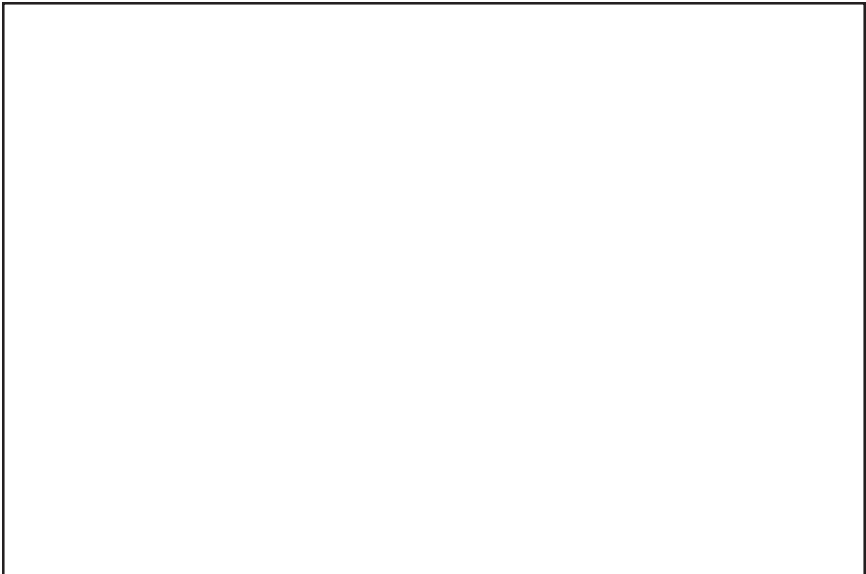
The Indented Paragraphs

Dr. Odhner also discovered that Swedenborg included in the work over four hundred paragraphs of spiritual experiences not before considered to be part of it. These were paragraphs in another work not published by Swedenborg that has been variously entitled *Explicatio*, *Adversaria*, or *The Word Explained*.

When Swedenborg first started having spiritual experiences he wrote them in *The Word Explained* and set them off by heavily indenting them. Later he realized he would need more room to write these experiences, and gave them their own separate volumes. The fact that Swedenborg covered the indented paragraphs in his index to the *Spiritual Experiences* taught Dr. Odhner that they were philosophically part of the work.

Rev. Dr. Jonathan Rose

PRESENTATION TO SWEDISH COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH IN THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES





The sixth and final volume of *Experientiae Spirituales* has now been printed and on June 5th, the editor of this new Latin edition presented the sixth and final volume to Secretary Olav Lindström of the HSFR (Svenska Humanistisk och Samhällsvetenskapliga Forskningsrådet). This Swedish Council for Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences has substantially supported the publication of volumes two to six of this work formerly known as *Diarium Spirituale* (The Spiritual diary).

Swedenborg's writings have aroused much public and international interest in recent years, largely because of the increasingly intense "near death experiences" research. This is illustrated by the short article in *Dagens Nyheter*, one of the two largest newspapers in Sweden. The article and a translation follow:

KULTUR/NÖJEN

Sista bandet andlig dagbok

LITTERATUR. Tre och ett halvt tusen nya sidor Emanuel Swedenborg finns nu tillgängliga för den som vill och kan läsa dennes särpräglade syntes av latin och stormaktstidens svenska. Det rör sig om "Esperientiae Spirituales" (på svenska vanligen kallad "Andliga dagboken"), som tidigare endast publicerats i en ofullständig version 1844, samt i engelska och danska översättningar. Sedan 1979 har den amerikanske lingvisten och prästen **J Durban Odhner** renskrivit, redigerat och indexerat Swedenborgs originalanteckningar. Sjätte och sista bandet överlämnades på måndagen till huvuduppdragsgivaren Humanistisk-samhällsvetenskapliga forskningsrådet.

"Esperientiae Spirituales" består av drygt 6 000 provisoriska anteckningar om Swedenborgs egna uppenbarelser och upplevelser av "insyn i den andra världen".

Per Jönsson

CULTURE/AMUSEMENTS

Last Volume of Spiritual Diary

LITERATURE. Three and a half thousand new pages of Emanuel Swedenborg are now accessible to anyone who wants or is able to read his distinct synthesis of Latin and the Swedish of the period of "Storm and Stress." We're talking about *Spiritual Experiences* (in Swedish usually called *The Spiritual Diary*), which had been published previously only in an incomplete version in 1844, as well as in English and Danish translations. Since 1979 the American linguist and priest **J. Durban Odhner** has transcribed, edited and indexed Swedenborg's autograph. The sixth and final volume was handed over on Monday to the main supporter, the Swedish Council for Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Experientiae Spirituales consists of more than 6000 first draft notations about Swedenborg's own revelations and experiences of "observations in the other world."

Per Jönsson