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SWEDENBORG'S DOCTRINE OF CORRESPONDENCE *

A SUMMARY

INGE JONSSON

The opening section [of the book] reminds us how often Swedenborg (1688-1772) was cited by Baudelaire and the French symbolists, particularly in the capacity of creator of the doctrine of correspondence. However, he seldom appears alone in the manifests and the theoretical tracts, but rather as a link in a widely ramified mystic tradition, in a *philosophia perennis*. Before Swedenborg's real influence can be determined, the special content which he chose to give his doctrine of correspondence must be uncovered. This was the goal of the research.

The book is divided into three main sections. The first deals with the background and basic assumptions of the doctrine, the second traces its development in detail and the third studies the application of his doctrine to Bible interpretation and its influence on Swedenborg's visions from the spiritual world. The first chapter of the first section examines the Latin word *correspondentia* and its origins. A rapid review of lexicons has shown that *correspondere* and *correspondentia* were first used in the Middle Ages, but only in peripheral usages: they were obviously considered to be poor Latin. In contrast to the low frequency of usage here, is the spreading of its analogue in the vernacular, for example, the French *correspondance*, which, in Swedenborg's time, was used in philosophical discussions on how the interaction between body and

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soul took place. It is in a similar connection, that the word *correspondentia* occurs for the first time in one of Swedenborg's manuscripts (1734) where he speaks incidentally of the angels' relations to the soul as a *correspondentia*. Swedenborg probably met with some examples of *correspondere* and *correspondentia* in the anatomical and philosophical literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which he studied with zeal. The Latin translation of *Recherche de la Vérité* by Malebranche seems to have been of particular importance. The lexical survey supports the hypothesis that the primary impulses for the doctrine of correspondence came from contemporary scientific literature. Therefore one should investigate Swedenborg's scientific erudition before considering the more esoteric sources such as the hermetic tradition which the symbolists actualized.

The second chapter studies Swedenborg's philosophy of nature as a background. Swedenborg completed his studies with a lengthy trip abroad. For a student with his insatiable interest for mathematics, England was the natural goal. His contact with this centre of the new scientific learning certainly implies that his perspective was broadened although he failed to abandon the Cartesian groundwork which he had got in Uppsala. He probably never met the leader of the new physics, Sir Isaac Newton, nor did he accept Newton's thesis on the vacuum, for example. Swedenborg's early natural philosophy was concentrated around three central propositions: 1) the Cartesian vortex theory, 2) the hypothesis that the earth and planets arose from the solar mass, and 3) a theory that matter consisted of particles of different degrees. The vortex theory was, apparently so self-evident to him that it did not need further discussion, but in both of the other propositions he modified the Cartesian system. While Descartes thought that matter streamed to the solar vortex from outside and thus formed the planets, Swedenborg thought that the earth and the other planets were parts emitted from the sun's mass. This is a simpler hypothesis, probably inspired by Thomas Burnet's *Telluris Theoria Sacra* among others, which more strongly sets forth the solar system's inner unity.

The same tendency to create a tighter inner connection in the Cartesian model occurs within the doctrine of particles which is of special interest when discussing the correspondence system. The main interest is linked with Swedenborg's considerations on the

origin of the particle series. After two earlier attempts around 1720, he presented an elaborated theory in *Principia Rerum Naturalium* in 1734. He lets the series begin with an abstract concept, namely, the mathematical point, and after that he distinguishes three kinds of units, called a finite, an active and an elementary unit. The process has been described as the multiplication of a primitive power with a primitive substance and Swedenborg permits us to follow it up to the new-born earth. The result was an extraordinarily tightly bound system. The motion throughout is the same: that of the spiral. In every elementary particle is found all the previous, through which the indefinite divisibility is thought to be certified; the finites have all possibilities to become actives on the assumption that there exists space without limit; in the smallest particle the whole universe is reflected, and in the actives there are correspondences to the act of Infinite Will, through which the mathematical point came forth. In addition, Swedenborg suggests the existence of other types of actives than have been accounted for; it is possible that he meant some sort of "spiritual matter," a foreshadowing of the spiritual world to come.

In all circumstances, the attempt made to express the particle series gives many proofs of the tendency to express verbally the abstract principles in the same manner as physical phenomena, which is one of the most important premises of the doctrine of correspondence. It occurs most clearly when Swedenborg discusses the grounds for his natural philosophy in the methodological introductory chapter to *Principia* and in the tract on infinity's problem which he wrote while under the effect of impressions received while editing *Principia*. In Swedenborgian literature, this is found under the name *De Infinito* and has been rightly noted by Hamann as being written in Wolff's scholastic spirit. Swedenborg came in contact with Christian Wolff's writings in Dresden in 1733 and took to them immediately. The final version of *Principia* shows that Swedenborg tried to adapt himself after Wolff, and *De Infinito* ought to be seen as a result of striving after metaphysical orientation in the same manner. The basic thought is that the boundary between the infinite and the finite, between God and nature must not be extinguished; the only *nexus* that exists is the Only-begotten Son. With philosophical methods we can never penetrate the divine essence, but we can learn to perceive that nature arose from infinity but in itself is nothing. In *De*

Infinito, there are a number of examples that reveal Swedenborg's fascination for mathematical expressions. His "immoderate desire" for mathematics was a definite ambition behind the doctrine of correspondence, but Swedenborg was anxious not to permit the modern infinitesimal calculus, which is a continuum theory, to function as anything more than an illustration here, not to confuse the algebraic infinity with the metaphysical—here lies a seed for the later criticisms of the Leibniz-Wolff system.

The chapter closes with an analysis of the small fragment *Philosophia Corpuscularis in Compendio* (1740) in which Swedenborg states for the first time that he has received a sign of truth. An examination of the manuscript reveals that this is best understood as a posthumous discussion with the great Dutch scientist Leeuwenhoek (1632–1724). Thus it should be interpreted as the first example of a situation which often recurs in the theosophic memorabilia, where Swedenborg's propositions are confirmed by different sorts of heavenly signs.

The third chapter, entitled "The living nature," discusses the biological background of the doctrine of correspondence. Even as early as the 1710's, Swedenborg strove to broaden his mechanical theories to include life-phenomena, therewith completely following the general tendency in the Cartesian tradition. His aim was to capture the psychic phenomena with the help of mechanical conceptions; the earliest efforts can be studied in two essays on tremulation as life's characteristic form of motion. They are distinguished by the ambition to replace the awkward idea of "life-spirit" with a purely mechanical model of vibrating membranes in the body.

However, he found it impossible to advance without a more solidly formed theory of elements. In preparatory studies to *Principia* we meet many examples of his attempts to parallel the body's membrane system with *Principia's* particle series. The most thorough of these is an essay on the body's and the soul's mechanism which was published together with *De Infinito* in 1734. In this, Swedenborg explains that he is conscious that his understanding of the soul as finite and subject to mechanical laws can lead to certain difficulties such as the guarantee of the soul's eternity; but he thought it even more dangerous to satisfy oneself with the present lack of knowledge and desperate solutions such as "life spirits." In contrast to such empty terms he wanted to propose an anatomical and neurological research program which was to prove the im-

mortality of the soul to the senses themselves. The leading part in the psycho-physical drama is played by the elements, and their laws of motion determine the reactions of the membranes and the nerve fibres. In order that the conveyance of motion within the organism should be rapid and correct, a harmonic *contiguum* is needed. However, if this is lacking, the soul is reached by dark and painful sense reports and gets used to disharmonies. When such souls are once liberated from the body, they will only experience pain before the harmony of the spiritual world. This is a direct foreshadowing of the visionary's experiences of how the dead were distributed between heaven and hell according to their own choice.

The membranes are intermediaries of the vibrations which have their centre in the soul (*anima*), the most active being of geometric structure. The soul must have its seat in the organ where the membranes reach their highest subtlety which is the cerebral cortex. In unpublished studies, Swedenborg went a long way to make this concrete. For example, he proposes that the soul is some sort of globe consisting of the first and second finite units' actives according to the particle scheme in *Principia*. This globe is carried up to heaven by angels when the body dies. He has even tried to illustrate his understanding of the soul with a sketch.

During his work on *Principia* and connected psycho-physical essays, he felt that he must broaden and deepen his biological and philosophical erudition. The purpose of his second journey abroad in the 1730's was to gain entrance to European libraries and centres of learning. His journey led first to Paris and later to Italy. In the manuscript volume that contains travel notes (cod. 88-93), there are more than three hundred pages of excerpts from different anatomists: Vieussens, Winslow, Ridley, Verheyen, Heister, etc., which are complemented in other areas with a whole line of famous scientists: Swammerdam, Boerhaave, Leeuwenhoek, Malpighi among the foremost. All this was made full use of afterwards during feverish work with different research projects up to 1745. The more he devoted himself to anatomical facts and ontological principles, the stronger became the necessity to modify the primitive tremulation model. At the same time, his ambition to create a synthesis attained a higher level of nervous urgency. His many projects can be distributed into three main groups. The first is a series of writings called *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* of which two

parts were published in Amsterdam in 1740. After his return home in the autumn of the same year he is thought to have prepared a third part which would deal with the cerebral cortex and the fibres among other things, but he never completed it. Instead he planned out a series of smaller theses, five or six per year, of which a few were completed. Even this project was given up, and in place of it appears the gigantic plan for *Regnum Animale*. According to an index in the first published volume (The Hague, 1744), the work should contain seventeen parts, but Swedenborg never published more than three. After that he was thrown out of his scientific orbit, first publishing a fragmentary work on creation and the first human couple, *De Cultu et Amore Dei* (1745).

Rather than rendering all the details of Swedenborg's biological thoughts, I have limited myself to four main groups of biological problems: the brain structure and its function, the blood and the other circulating fluids in the body, procreation, and the fibres. A distinct boundary between them cannot be rightfully maintained in discussing an authorship of a quality that extends over all boundaries; finally, the outermost.

Swedenborg's studies in the brain's anatomy and physiology in the later half of the 1730's resulted in a voluminous collection of excerpts and a number of large manuscripts which were published in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He did not publish more of his material than the two first chapters in *Oeconomia II* himself, but his anatomical erudition undoubtedly played an important role for his manner of experiencing the spiritual world. In his early reports in *Diarium Spirituale* (1747-63), one often witnesses how his still photograph of the human brain changes to a movie film; how the convolutions develop into whirling angel choirs.

His propositions in *Oeconomia II* begin with the brain's cortex. The concentration on the cerebral cortex and the fluids, which flow through or go out from there, should be seen as a completion of the geometrical model of his youthful writings which was founded on circulating fluids that stretched out the membranes and exchanged their tremulations. The cerebral cortex is understood as a woven pattern of the finest capillaries from the innermost arteries in the *pia meninx*. Through these the purest blood streams into the cerebral cortex and from these further into the fibres of the medullary parts, the spinal cord and the nervous system. A definite condition for his thesis on the cerebral cortex's dispersive function

is obviously the existence of different sorts of blood and Swedenborg also began *Oeconomia* I with a detailed summary of modern blood research. Malpighi, Leeuwenhoek and others have shown that the blood consists of many elements and Swedenborg drew the conclusion that there exists a purest fluid—by some called life spirit—which is contained in the red blood, as well as an intermediary quality of blood. The red blood arises thus through a reversible three-step process: the ordinary blood vessels (*vasa*), the capillary vessels and the fibres. Thus there is a more universal liquid flowing in the body than the blood's circulation in the arteries and veins; namely, a circulation from the fibres to the blood vessels and vice versa.

After the introductory speculations on the blood, Swedenborg felt forced to take up the question of which parts of the organism were formed first in the egg. With this, he had forced his way into an area where the mechanical biology earliest revealed itself insufficient and it is completely natural that it is just in this chapter that he goes beyond his Cartesian limits. In order to clarify how the chicken is formed in the egg, he found the terms such as motion and form insufficient and was forced to formulate a thesis which had great meaning for the future: "There is a certain formative substance or force, that draws the thread from the first living point, and afterwards continues it to the last point of life. This is called by some the plastic force, and the *Archaeus*; by others, simply nature in action; but I think it will be more intelligible if in reference to the work of formation we term it the formative force and substance." A survey of generation theories and their philosophical implications indicates how Swedenborg's development runs parallel to that of Leibniz and Malebranche: that which distinguishes him is his closely held world of biological concepts. In the end, he traced all the life processes back to the brain, which, in his opinion, was the first things to be developed in the egg.

The smallest observable parts in the cerebral cortex, *cerebellula* or *sphaerulae*, are certainly products of the capillaries from the blood vessels, but they cannot in themselves be considered as vessels but rather as a sort of membranes enclosed in spheres. But, according to Swedenborg, there exist cells of an even finer form which construct a sort of neuro-cellular cortex: each cell becomes accordingly an infinitesimal brain whose relation to the whole he tries to describe in mathematical terms as a harmonious or homo-

geneous analogy. In the fibre structure of the body, nothing can happen without an immediate report to the centre, that is, the brain cells. From here it advances further to the highest receiving organ, which is the first degree of the brain's series, the supposed *cortex cerebelluli*. From here, or in these invisible parts, the communication with the soul takes place. But how it occurs can not, according to Swedenborg, be described with the terms of ordinary speech. Nature's advances to higher levels must be followed by a substitution of words, as occurs when a visual impression meets a higher psychic plane and is then called representation or thought. This example shows how Swedenborg gropes his way towards the psycho-physical correspondence terminology.

The spiritual flow, which is formed of the highest or the innermost brain parts, streams out along two paths, partially via the nerves, partially in conjunction with the blood. So far is our normal speech usable, but when we must explain how the spiritual unites itself with an organic flowing, our ordinary ontological definitions of such concepts as power, spirit, substance, etc., are only empty words. Swedenborg tries to give them content by giving prominence to the correspondence between the body's fluids and nature's auras, since both represent nature's forces. The more complicated the psycho-physical mechanism reveals itself to be, the more difficult becomes the formulation problem. Swedenborg evidently endeavoured, with the help of many authorities, to complete his philosophical equipage. The chapter closes with an examination of one of his sources, up to now unknown to research, namely Scipion Duplex' *Corps de Philosophie Contenant la Logique, la Physique, la Metaphysique et L'Ethique* (1636). From this handbook, Swedenborg has taken practically all his citations from authors of antiquity and the Fathers of the Church for *Oeconomia*. Therewith, the amount of material that he was thought to have read has been reduced to completely different proportions.

With that, we leave his background and take up the second section: the study of how the doctrine of correspondence took form. This is introduced by a chapter on the ontological foundation. The first part of *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* closes with an "Introduction to Rational Psychology." There Swedenborg discusses, among other things, the three current theories of the intercourse between body and soul—*influxus physicus*, *occasionalism*, and *harmonia*

praestabilita—but he is not yet pleased with any of them and pleads for a synthesis of them which he wants to call *harmonia constabilita*. The necessary condition for this is, however, a correct conception of nature's order, and Swedenborg thought that he could formulate a doctrine on that ordering: the doctrine of series and degrees. That is meant to be a description of the way in which nature subordinates and coordinates things. A union of subordinated and coordinated objects is called a series and consists of discrete degrees. Everything in the universe except nature's first substance belongs to or forms a series. Arithmetic, geometry, physics, physiology, and philosophy consist of mere series; all social forms contain series; we speak, think and act in series, and our perceptions are series of harmonic changes. This is the most extreme example up to now of Swedenborg's tendency to erase the boundaries between objects and thought categories. This indicates also the mathematical inspiration of the doctrine of series; it is a dizzying development of Galileo's maxim to measure everything that is measurable and to try to make measurable what is not already. The closest link to this seventeenth century tradition is again through Wolff.

In his struggle with the ontological problems, Swedenborg first follows Aristotle and Wolff, but his reasoning often conceals opposition to the authorities and is, throughout, unclear. He labours, for example, with two different substance terms; a common term which is suitable only for nature's first substance and a special term which covers the first substance in every series. According to Swedenborg, the latter type was usually called the elements, the monads, and the primitive or simple substances, but Swedenborg warns us not to consider them as absolutely simple, since that would imply that all of nature's imperfections were found even at the creation. Rather, every series' substance is in various ways related to nature's first substance and determines all things which are contained in the series. In this way, a *harmonia constabilita* arises, which is exemplified by the spiritual fluid's function within the series that constitutes the human body. The more clearly the simple substances are separated from the more complex, the more perfect becomes the harmony which is most easily shown in the human brain where the blood assumes a purer form in the cerebral cortex in spite of the fact that the flowing does not cease for a moment. Up to this point our intellect is able to comprehend a

refined form of harmonic variation, but in the higher spheres it is not able to comprehend since the degrees can not be expressed with ordinary figures.

The mathematical parallels recur when Swedenborg uses the doctrine of series and degrees to force himself into nature's smallest constituents. In order to denote the smallest at every level, he uses the term *unitas* which contains an unsaid protest against Wolff who chose to avoid terms such as the corresponding monad so as not to risk gliding from the ontological to the mathematical plane. In a series of three degrees, Swedenborg's normal model, there are three clearly distinguished units (*unitates*). These are located on three different "simplicity levels" but are all related to each other, and compounded objects consisting of such units are like equations which are homogeneous and compounded of units. Every compound of co-ordinated objects can be broken down to its *unitas*, its smallest constituent, but with that one has not reached an absolute final point. It is possible to go further, but then one oversteps the boundaries of the next higher level. That becomes a consequence of the general thesis, applicable also to every *unitas*, that everything except the first substance in the universe is a series. In the tripartition that Swedenborg assumed, a higher unity will be related to the next lower in the same series as a root to its cube, but then homogeneity ceases.

The psychological chapter at the end of *Oeconomia* I emerges into some speculations around what Swedenborg calls a mathematical philosophy of universals. This term is met with earlier in his manuscripts. Apparently Swedenborg has seen his doctrine of series and degrees as a basis for its construction. A rapid review of the many seventeenth century attempts to construct a perfectly logical artificial language shows that Swedenborg's prototype was Leibniz's dream of the *Characteristica universalis*, once again under the agency of Wolff. A short fragment with the proud title *Philosophia Universalium Characteristica et Mathematica* implies that Swedenborg tried to construct a symbol system for a conceptual algebra, but this was interrupted before any accounting operations were presented. The attempt can not have been anything else but discouraging, and when he returned to the problem of *mathesis universalis* in his next psychological study, the posthumously published *De Anima*, he claims explicitly that he wants to work out a substitute for it through a doctrine of correspondences and repre-

sentations. Herewith it becomes definite that the doctrine of correspondence must be regarded as a birth *aus dem Geist der Mathematik*.

The chapter contains, moreover, a summary of Swedenborg's form doctrine. This is formulated in the planned but uncompleted third part of the *Oeconomia* series. Swedenborg here distinguishes a form scale of six steps, from the lowest angular form over the circular (perpetuo-angular), the spiral (perpetuo-circular), the vortical (perpetuo-spiral) and the celestial (perpetuo-vortical)—identical with what Plato in the *Timaios* called The One, with Leibniz's monad and Wolff's simple substance—up to the perpetuo-celestial or spiritual form. As is seen, there is added a "quality of perpetuity" with the transition to higher forms in the physical form world and the same thing is valid for the corresponding vital forms. Through this manner of transforming the Aristotelian concept of form, Swedenborg evidently thought to win legitimization of his hypostatizing tendency, and the doctrine of forms is consequently another important basis for correspondence thinking.

The next chapter, the fifth, deals with the incomplete treatise from the beginning of the 1740's in which the doctrine of correspondence was presented in detailed form. The work has been entitled *Clavis Hieroglyphica, A Hieroglyphic Key to Natural and Spiritual Arcana by Way of Representations and Correspondences*, and came out for the first time twelve years after Swedenborg's death (1784). It consists of twenty-one examples which connect directly with the enumeration of corresponding degrees in different series which is found in the closing chapter of *Oeconomia* I. Swedenborg begins directly with an example: "As long as motion endures so long does conatus endure; for conatus is the motive force of nature. But conatus alone is a dead force." After this physical proposition, follows its psychological correspondence: "As long as action continues so long does will continue; for will is the human mind's conatus to action. From will alone no action follows." And finally he presents the theological equivalent: "The Divine operation is as perpetual as His providence; for providence is the Divine will to operate. But from providence alone no operation follows." After the example, there follow a number of commentaries and rules and this disposition is constant throughout.

In the commentary to the first example it can be determined where Swedenborg got his general inspiration for the doctrine of

correspondence. The first rule distinguishes three classes of phenomena which can be interrelated: the class of natural phenomena, the living and the rational (and through this also the moral) class, and finally the class of spiritual phenomena. This tripartite division wholly agrees with the harmonies Leibniz postulates in his *Monadology*. The second rule establishes that the central concept in every proposition must be expressed with such terms as are appropriate to the level of meaning, as in the example when he uses such words as conatus, will and providence. This basic principle is elaborated in the following rules which also assume that the less essential words in every proposition—continue, endure, alone, etc.—can remain unchanged at all levels.

The aim with such an exchange of terms is naturally to arrive at a dictionary of correspondences and there is even a beginning towards this at the end of the tract. Even if *Clavis Hieroglyphica* contains a terminological simplification and sharpening in relation to *Oeconomia*, there remain evident traces of the original mathematical inspiration. Example VI reads: "From effects and phenomena judgment is made concerning the world and nature, and from the world and nature conclusion is made as to effects and phenomena. From actions and inclinations judgment is made concerning man and the rational mind, and from man and his mind, when known, conclusion is made as to actions and inclinations. From works and the testimonies of love judgment is made concerning God, and from God conclusion is made as to His works and the testimonies of His love." This combination belongs to those which lead up to a new truth, this time set up as a "harmony or analogy": "As the world stands in respect to man, so stand natural effects in respect to rational actions. As man stands in respect to God, so stand human actions in respect to divine works." Under the heading *Regula*, Swedenborg maintains that an analogy can be set up with the help of these propositions and then transformed to an equation. If we call the world M (*mundus*), man H (*homo*), effects E (*effectus*), and actions A (*actiones*), we can write the analogy M.H:E:A. How these terms can be combined with others, multiplied and placed in analytical equations, he promises to explain in a later demonstration, and he explicitly calls the analogy "the first rudiments of *mathesis universalis*." At the same time, Swedenborg must have perceived that such enormously extensive conceptions lead to little pleasure if one wishes to make

concrete the spiritual reality's natural reflection in detail, and his mathematical ambitions accordingly weakened. Instead, he came nearer to that which would be his final goal, the interpretation of the Sacred Scripture.

After further examples, which are analyzed in the text, Swedenborg formulated the central idea of the doctrine of correspondence, the thesis that there does not exist anything in nature which is not a representation of something spiritual. This proposition, he says, was thought to have been understood even by the Egyptians who annotated the correspondences with hieroglyphic letters which could express both natural and spiritual things at the same time. Therewith, he has given an explanation of the tract's title. A relatively detailed survey of hieroglyph tradition in Europe and Sweden up to Swedenborg's time shows that even in this direction, Wolff pointed out the way to Swedenborg. Amongst the excerpts from *Psychologia Empirica*, we meet the idea of hieroglyphs in central contexts. When a thing is transferred to denote another phenomenon, Wolff uses the expression hieroglyphic meaning (*significatum hieroglyphicum*): a triangle has thus hieroglyphic meaning when it denotes the triune God. Formerly, this art was used by the Egyptians, the Chinese and other nations, says Wolff. As an illustration, Wolff uses, among other things, Comenius' method of representing the soul in his textbook *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* as a human figure consisting of points. With this, he indicates the soul's indivisibility (the points), its substantiality, its union with the body, and its capacity of being in the whole body at the same time that it is in every part (the human figure). Besides pointing to Egypt and China, Wolff reminds us of the theologian Caspar Neumann who ascribed a hieroglyphic signification to the Hebrew letters, which might have been of importance for Swedenborg's later development.

It is evident in Swedenborg's commentary of 1734 that he was inspired by Wolff's theses to speculate upon a writing system which could express almost anything. His formulations are close to those which he was to use later on in the mathematical philosophy of universals. There is no doubt that Wolff was his most important source, but it is insufficient to state that alone in order to clarify the special pattern of his doctrine of correspondence. *Clavis Hieroglyphica* closes with Swedenborg distinguishing four categories of correspondences. These divisions go back to a preliminary group-

ing of Bible texts which are to be found in the manuscript codex 36-110, based almost exclusively upon Sebastian Castellio's Latin translation. It opens with the category *correspondentia harmonica*, which, in the first place, covers images out of nature thought to illustrate spiritual phenomena (for example God and the angels as fire and light phenomena). The next category is called *correspondentia allegorica* and consists almost completely of parables. The third is called *correspondentia typica* and is, apparently, to correspond to what is usually called typological or figurative interpretation, an event or prophecy in the Old testament that foreshadows Christ or the new covenant and the eternal life. This category takes up the greatest space, which is natural in view of the fact that it deals with an aspect which deletes time's limits and lifts events up to the representative plane. The fourth group, *correspondentia fabulosa et somniorum*, contains myths, poetic representations, and dreams. These four categories are mentioned in *Clavis Hieroglyphica*.

His first attempt to systematize the correspondence categories is, at the same time, the earliest known example in Swedenborg's works of a systematic examination of the Bible, and it was almost certainly performed before writing *Clavis Hieroglyphica*. These Biblical studies had been carried out in accordance with the psychophysical research program of 1734. The result accounted for in the manuscript 36-110, fits well together with its general plan, according to which the Scripture should be used in accompaniment with ten other named sources. That the Bible contained many planes of signification was a self-evident assumption for Swedenborg who did not need to refer back to any particular authority. It is, however, essential to note that while he was extracting excerpts from Malebranche, Leibniz, and Bilfinger, he met a number of Biblical references which they thought could support their psychophysical systems. At the same time, he found in these sources not only a frequent usage of the ideas *repraesentatio* and *harmonia*, but also examples of the term *correspondentia*. In my opinion, that was the direct impulse towards his attempt to group Bible texts into a number of categories which were entitled *Typus*, *Repraesentatio*, and *Correspondentia* and of which the first received the characteristic attribute of *harmonica*.

The next chapter, the sixth, discusses Swedenborg's psychology and its relationship to the doctrine of correspondence. Before con-

tinuing the *Oeconomia* series, he felt a need to deepen his studies in the psychological areas, and the earliest result is found in the manuscript 36-110. The most important of the newly arrived authorities are Malebranche and the Swedish Cartesian Andreas Rydelius, and even St. Augustine and Leibniz take up a large space. In contrast to this, there is not a single modern empiricist, not even Locke, nor any "mystical" source. The selection, however, adheres to Swedenborg's general ambition to unite antiquity's wisdom with modern experience, which is shown by examples from the pseudo-Augustinian *De Spiritu et Anima* and Andreas Rydelius' *Nödiga Förnufts Öfningar*.

Repræsentatio was a central idea in contemporary rationalistic psychology. Swedenborg almost always uses it in connection with correspondence, but it is such an all-inclusive and complicated concept that one is often doubtful as to its exact content. As usual, Swedenborg seems to be a pupil of Wolff, but he shows himself hesitant to appropriate the precise Wolffian terminology. On the whole, one witnesses in Swedenborg's works perpetual new attempts to grasp the problems rather than consistent evaluations based on real penetration. One characteristic is, however, general, namely, the striving to replace that which he considered abstruse rhetoric with a first-hand neuro-physiological proof—the research program from 1734, *ut ipsis sensibus demonstretur animae immortalitas*, he never renounced.

This appears plainly in the series of psychological pamphlets which were written in the early 1740's between *Oeconomia* and *Regnum Animale*, especially in a fragmentarily preserved essay on the harmony between the soul and the body. It includes a sharp criticism of the *harmonia praestabilita* model. He finds it most difficult to swallow the idea that the presence of material ideas in the brain should not at all contribute to the occurrence of perceptions and ideas in the soul. What, then, is the reason that the body reacts almost simultaneously with the soul and vice versa? How can the wonderful correspondence between them in cause and effect be explained other than by a real connection (*nexus*)? What pleasure has this renowned system given when it determines that all the body's laws are unreachable to science? Swedenborg means that the system is an all too far driven analogy to infinitesimal calculus; at the same time, it is remote from anatomical facts. He understands his own position in the following manner: that the

soul (*anima*) decides the foetal development from the moment of conception; that the soul, accordingly, is not a simple substance, that is to say, an imaginary entity; that the soul, after the body's death, is freed from all its membranes and fibre fetters and with a representation of its body engraved raises itself to the heavenly aura in proportion to the degree of purity and holiness it has obtained in earthly life; that we are deceived by our senses which belong to the lower auras—what can be understood there as a unity, can in reality be a product or a maximum; that the soul's union with the body appears best in the research results of anatomy where it is assumed that nothing exists in the body that does not form a *connexio continua* (through membranes) or a *connexio contigua* (through fluids); that the soul functions as a principle and cause for the somatic structure.

The same outlook, which, in itself, did not hinder him in the same study from expressing great admiration for Leibniz and Wolff, is developed in the chief psychological work, the uncompleted *De Anima*. In an introductory part on sensation, he exploits the doctrine of forms in combination with his hypotheses on the brain structure. Since the cerebral cortex is constructed so that all its fibres are united through a membrane, all sensations come into contact with every brain cell (*glandula corticalis*). Between these, however, exists from the beginning a *varietas harmonica* which assures that every cell leaves its individual contribution to the collective impression in such a form that it agrees with the totality. The sensation is adapted to the recipient form after it has left the fibre and that means that it "passes" through the brain in the form of a spiral motion. Such refined sensations which reach into every cell's cortex, move in accordance with its form which is the next highest (that is the vortical) and, with that, follows of itself that the innermost perception which is identical with intellectual understanding must have the highest form in nature, the celestial. In his comprehensive chapter on sensation, Swedenborg finally establishes that the more perfect the forms are, the more agreeable they are to the senses and vice versa. Afterwards he pursues his reasoning on form in different sense spheres. Of especial interest is his handling of how the sense of hearing develops the intellect. Every word has a representative meaning and representations of this kind are bound together in such a manner that there arises a rational form out of them which is a form that can

only appear when material forms are bound together in a rational and analytical manner. The more intellectual these ideas are, the greater the number of analytically joined representations must be, and from the final products of them the reason draws its conclusions on what is innermost in them. Such a deeply layered content cannot be expressed with any terms or phrases of our ordinary speech, for on that level there is only "spiritual or angelic speech, or a universal philosophy, and only the perception of truths and a most perfect and divine harmony of those truths among themselves."

After that follows a detailed survey of how Swedenborg tries to unite his psychic tripartition—*anima*, the soul; *mens*, reason; and *animus*, sense consciousness—with his hypotheses on the cerebral structure. Here some psychological details are studied, which are directly bound up with the doctrine of correspondence. In order to explain how the pure intellect, which is the highest intellectual organ next under the inaccessible soul's level, flows into the sphere of reason, Swedenborg is forced to give his concept of correspondence new attributive qualifications. Thus occurs an acquired correspondence (*correspondentia acquisita*) between a word and the representations that it awakens. The connection between an impression of sight and its psychic effect is, instead, considered as a combination of an acquired correspondence and a natural one (*correspondentia naturalis*). When the visual images reach the brain cells, the harmony among the images leads to a change of state and thereby to a representation. It is thus a natural correspondence which causes this change of state in the sensory, but with man this change is only potential and is actualized through learning, in contrast to the situation of brute animals. Therefore it is correct to speak of an acquired correspondence based on a natural one.

There is evidence that Swedenborg hesitated about the adequate application of his correspondence concept, but it is clear that with its help, he thought that he could reach a synthesis of the three current psycho-physical systems which he had discussed earlier. In the review of *De Infinito* in *Acta Eruditorum* 1735, Swedenborg had been praised for his ambition to explain the connection between body and soul as *influxus physicus* but was also urged to inform himself, among other things, of Bilfinger's account of *harmonia praestabilita*. He followed the recommendation and the result became the synthesis which in *De Anima* is

taken further than before. The central idea in his synthesis became *correspondentia*, and with that it can be determined with certainty how the doctrine of correspondence has grown out of the contemporary psycho-physical debate. This does not imply that Swedenborg interrupted his psychological speculations. During the theosophical period, the *influxus* idea came to great importance and in the final account of the intercourse problem, a short study called *De Commercio Animae et Corporis* 1769, the doctrine of series and degrees, the influx doctrine, and the correspondence pattern were united in a psycho-physical system which was closely related to the Cartesian tradition, especially to Malebranche's version. The summing up proceeds from the thesis that two worlds exist, a spiritual and a natural, each of which originated from and was supported by its own sun and between which there rules a total correspondence. From the spiritual sun flows out warmth and light to every man, warmth into his will and light into his understanding. Here is awakened the good of love and the truth of wisdom and from these levels continues an *influxus spiritualis* to the organs of the body. This divine inflow is, however, received in different ways according to man's situation, and it appears also in different forms depending on which degree it is in. Swedenborg makes here an exact distinction between three discrete degrees, the degree of end, the degree of cause, and the degree of effect, which correspond to the three heavenly levels and man's three psychical faculties.

My survey of Swedenborg's psychological development tries to prove that there is no reason to search for his inspiration outside the general framework of contemporary rationalistic psychology (including St. Augustine, so important in seventeenth century European thought). That Swedenborg's inspiration in such a way can be traced back to a rather confined circle does not imply that its results should be easily grasped. On the contrary, we have constantly been forced to establish terminological shifts, to say nothing of other obscurities. One thing, however, is certain, and that has the same validity for his theosophical works: in all Swedenborg's psychological studies his anatomical and physiological reading is constantly decisive and one must always remember that even the most abstruse ideas for him could be made into quite concrete *scènes de la vie cérébrale*, even if he was not capable of expressing them adequately.

With that, we are up to the third and final section called "Correspondences and the Word." This opens with a chapter on Swedenborg's ideas of language. For this theosopher, language stood in the centre. It is characteristic that Swedenborg in *Arcana Caelestia* explained that the reason that God permitted himself to be born on our planet is because the art of writing is oldest here!

The chapter opens with a survey of the philosophy of language from Plato up to Swedenborg's time concentrating on the problem of the origins of language and its relation to the signified objects. In general, two main lines can be distinguished: a Platonic from the *Cratylus* which holds that words, in different ways, reflect the object's innermost nature and arose from some form of divine intervention, and an Aristotelian, which holds that the multitude of languages arose through custom and agreement. In different forms, these traditions can be identified in such parts of ancient and modern literature with which Swedenborg, in all probability, was familiar. In fact, he might have been initiated into the philosophy of language both by his father and his brother-in-law, the learned philologist Erik Benzelius. In those days, this speculation included the subtle problem of angelic speech. In the cabbalistic tradition, Hebrew was thought to be the angels' language, but when knowledge of Hebrew disappeared amongst the Christians, this claim to a unique holiness weakened. With Isidorus of Seville, there appear three holy languages, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, the languages of the cross inscription (St. John 19: 19, 20). For the Lutheran orthodoxy, here represented by Abraham Calovius' *Biblia Illustrata*, angelic speech was of two distinct sorts, firstly a spiritual and wordless language used in intercommunication, secondly a sensuous and wordbound language used in conversations with men, normally their native tongue.

The study of Swedenborg's own thoughts on language is difficult for the same peculiarities that hold generally. His numerous statements on the spiritual language are contained in different contexts—theoretical surveys, arranged memorabilia, and hasty notations in his diary. Consequently, it is often difficult to extract a consistent import from them. In spite of the undeniable contradictions and other complications, it is possible to separate certain consistent ideas and even to establish a development in Swedenborg's language theories. For those who want to investigate the doctrine of correspondence, it is impossible to pass by the language prob-

lems, however difficult they may be. In several statements on language in *De Anima*, he appears to be a convinced Aristotelian. Speech sounds in themselves are not a source of intellectual experience but are merely conventional. But there are also sounds which cause experiences of another kind, emotional expressions such as sounds of brutes and the corresponding human phenomena—interjections and other such emotional expressions.

Similar ideas recur when Swedenborg approaches the culmination of his religious crisis. In the study of the senses in the *Regnum Animale* series, he develops the thesis that all harmony between lower and higher things, between *posteriora* and *priora*, is successively established but not pre-established—still another version of the polemic against Wolff. But now he includes certain complicating factors. There are moments in lower *modi*, perceptions, and representations, which, in a natural manner, influence higher things and there are examples of this in language. We can give our utterances emotional color by modulation of the voice which becomes especially evident with tonal composition. Swedenborg reminds us of the Italian opera music's ability to influence sensuality. On a higher plane, the intellectual level, a comparable influence can be arrived at through rhetorical arrangements. When we are subject to language influences, it occurs exclusively through changes of state of a mechanical-physiological sort in the sensual apparatus and, normally, there are no harmonic influences, says Swedenborg in another place in the same manuscript. Language consists, namely, of a number of *modi* which are the result of convention and upbringing, but certain emotional effects can be supplied. A thus complemented language is partially natural and can be expressed in visual form with symbols such as the Egyptian hieroglyphs.

Thus far are his opinions of little distinction. In contrast to this conventional language, which is reason's privilege and limitation, stands, however, the soul's ability of synthetic representation. The echo of its wordless speech, the dark reappearance of its projections of divine light reach the reason in the form of dream images, parables, and correspondences to the myths of the Silver Age. There is, naturally, the contrast which is basic for Swedenborg's speculation on language, and which distinguishes the theosopher's situation from the scientist's; after 1745, the hidden wisdom of the soul was revealed to him. A great amount of the space in

the spiritual diary 1747-63 was occupied with problems surrounding spiritual language and that is also the case in some of the printed works. My review, carried out in some detail, leads to the following conclusions. Even if the heavenly tongues do not use an earthly vocabulary, but rather a sign-and-sound system which allows an enormously large meaning assignment in single words, it seems that there exists a rather close relationship between that system and what Swedenborg calls Ancient Hebrew. There is a distinct difference between the spiritual speech and the speech which spirits and angels use when they speak with men who are yet in the flesh. In the latter case, the man's mother-tongue is exploited, the reason being that the angels are bound to man and enter into his memory. The contact is so complete that the heavenly guests can scarcely hold their knowledge apart from those they visit. After what Swedenborg proclaimed in *De Caelo* 1758, mankind is now so depraved that the angels are not able to establish any direct connection; that must be done through intermediary spirits. The spiritual speech is heard by man as clearly as if he conversed with another man, but his hearing, in this case, is influenced from inside. That means a physiological influence which, finally, stretches itself to the tongue, which is set into gentle vibrations. This reminiscence of his previous tremulation psychology says much about how Swedenborg himself experienced his conversations with the spirits in the loneliness of his workroom and his bedchamber; but his interpretations give an almost pathetic impression of his deep sense of responsibility. Namely, he warns his readers immediately of the risks of spiritual contacts. If someone begins to speak with spirits, which always follow one, the spirits begin to realize where they are, which they usually do not know, and if they are evil spirits, they direct all their energy to destroy one. For one of the chosen like himself, the perils are balanced out by strong nerves and divine protection, but for the ordinary reader it would be fatal to try to re-experience his revelations. To an especially high degree, that applied to the many devotees of the occult and magical in his time. In his letters one can see that he never gave them any support in their attempts to converse with spirits.

One can listen to echoes of the discussion on language problems of many centuries in Swedenborg's writings, and it is necessary to identify them in order to determine his primary sources. However,

the decisive influence is finally his own psycho-physical system, built up with elements from contemporary mechanics, mathematics, anatomy, physiology, and psychology and structured with the support, at first hand, of Aristotelian and Leibnizian ontology. Apart from the effects of his work with the Hebrew Bible, nothing has come out up to now which needs to assume some systematic study outside of the general framework.

The next chapter, the eighth, deals with the import of the doctrine of correspondence for Bible interpretation. There are no special studies on Swedenborg's theology, but the fact that it was based, to an extreme degree, upon the Scriptures and especially their concealed inner meaning is obvious even without professional help. During his theosophical period, Swedenborg did not accept any longer the idea that a "natural theology" exists as he did at the time of *De Infinito*. What has been regarded as a *theologia naturalis* was really the fruit of a revelation, and the Bible is, in its presently existing form, not at all a complete rendering of heavenly knowledge. Swedenborg's opinion of the Word and the correspondence categories is distinguished by certain changes which often run parallel to his language speculations, but it also contains certain interesting historical nuances.

In his first published presentation of the Bible's style—in the introduction to *Arcana Caelestia* (1749) using a vision reported in the spiritual diary the previous year—Swedenborg makes a coarse division into four categories from different periods. The first style type occurs in Genesis before Abraham's time and reflects the totally correspondential world of the Most Ancient Church. The second is called the historical style and is found in the rest of the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and the books of Kings. The third is found in the prophetic books which are closely related to the first type without being as historically coherent. The fourth is the style of the Psalms. Later in *Arcana*, he gives clearer statements about the first man's Word, according to which the handed down Scriptures do not include and cannot include the oldest periods. *Ecclesia Antiquissima* which took place before the Flood, consisted of holy people in complete communication with the angels and, for them, there was no need of any written Word—it was written on their heart. When they experienced anything with the senses, their thoughts were immediately directed towards heavenly and spiritual truths which the earthly objects represented. Nor

was there any need of a *doctrine* of correspondence for these people who had access to the *lingua universalis*. It cannot be denied that there is an obvious lack of clarity in this early work and the explanation is, of course, that Swedenborg's text interpretation developed while he was working.

In the preparatory work to *Arcana* which Immanuel Tafel published under the name *Adversaria in Libros Veteris Testamenti*, Swedenborg presents another idea of the Word's senses which concerns neither historical nor stylistic levels but should be valid generally. The first *sensus* is that of the letter, *externus, historicus seu Literalis*, and alludes only to those persons who appear directly in the text. The second meaning relates to their descendants and what will happen to them. This is an inner sense (*internus*), which can also be called *superior ac universalis*. The third level does not only encompass their direct progeny but all who in some sense are related to them; among others, the Christian church. This sense is called *intimior, universalior* and even *caelestis et spiritualis*. There is also a fourth and highest meaning level which covers Messiah and His coming and, with that, the whole coming world cycle—*intimus, universalissimus, divinus*: truth itself. This sense is considered by the previous as their innermost and their end, their life, soul, and spiritual light. In this way, the Word corresponds to creation as a whole, and the human body can be compared with the Word—deepest in it exists its soul and life, which is the only really living thing in its myriad of fibres. In the body are also found four *facultates*, which the text interpreter declared so many times as a scientist.

With this reference, Swedenborg gave the clearest possible description of the model that he tried to actualize in his early writings: the doctrine of series and degrees, the foundation of the doctrine of correspondence from the *Oeconomia* series. It is, from this point of view, so much more striking, that he did not mention at all his ambitious category scheme for the Scriptural correspondences which he worked out in the beginning of the 1740's. Even if there are certain agreements, it is an unavoidable conclusion that he did not consider his early correspondence scheme usable for a detailed study of the Scriptures.

The clearest presentation of his principles of textual interpretation are laid out in his short tract *Doctrina Novae Hierosolymae de Scriptura Sacra* 1763. From the Lord's love arises the celestial,

which is the divine good, and from His wisdom arises the spiritual, the divine truth, and both are united in the natural, which is the outermost link in the golden chain. So that the Word should be complete, it must correspond to these three degrees, and the literal sense contains two higher senses in the same way as an effect contains both its efficient cause and its final cause. As in *Oeconomia* and *Clavis Hieroglyphica*, which used the same example although without adapting it to the Scriptures, the degrees are discrete, between which the connection can only be maintained by correspondences. That is the content of the repeatedly occurring assurance that the Word is composed of correspondences.

After the proclamation of these theses follows a historical aperçu, the first—but by no means the final—exposition of the history of the doctrine of correspondence in Swedenborg's writings. The science of correspondences was, in antiquity, *scientia scientiarum*. That expression was used earlier as a synonym to *mathesis universalium*, and the general affinity of the doctrine of correspondence with speculations on the mathematical philosophy of universals is, thus, still actual. This science of sciences was so well known in ancient times that all *codices et libri* were written in the language of correspondences. We can see this in Job's book, which Swedenborg thought to be a work of post-deluvian age, in the hieroglyphs of Egypt, and in classical mythology. There is no doubt that Swedenborg really considered the science of correspondences as a historically sound fact and its spreading seems to agree with contemporary theories about the spreading of the alphabet. As times went by, Swedenborg continued, the *repraesentativa* of the church, which, in reality, were correspondences, were transformed to idols and magical amulettes. Then Providence sank *scientia scientiarum* into oblivion. This wonderful science could not be reawakened before Swedenborg's own time for three reasons: 1) the first Christians were too simple and intellectually undeveloped to understand it, 2) the papacy swamped Christendom in darkness, amongst other ways, by withholding the Word from mankind and proclaiming the Trinity dogma at the Council of Nice, and 3) Lutheran solifidianism implied the risk that one would have referred correspondences to faith only and not to the love of God and men.

➤ According to this presentation, the doctrine of correspondence seems to have been completely forgotten before Swedenborg received the mission to reawaken it, but only three years later the

picture was changed. In *Apocalypsis Revelata* 1766, he presented a new revelation according to which *Verbum Vetustum* should still live with the inhabitants of Greater Tartary (*Magna Tartaria*). This pre-Israelitic Word consists of mere correspondences and the Tartaric angels maintained that, in this, was included the so-called *Liber Jaschar* and the older writings which Swedenborg had spoken of earlier under the name *Bella Jehovae* and *Enuntiata*, that is, the Word written in correspondences in *Ecclesia Antiqua* which *Arcana* claimed had vanished. As a possible explanation to this strange localization, the medieval legend of the kingdom of Prester John is suggested but only as a weak hypothesis. Balzac was fascinated by Swedenborg's reports of the Tartaric exile of the science of correspondences and, via *Séraphita* and *Louis Lambert*, contributed towards tightening the esoteric association-complex around the name Swedenborg. By his surprising reference to *Magna Tartaria* Swedenborg seems to have placed his doctrine of correspondence in an unbroken succession from the oldest church. In the visionary's world of fantasy were, thus, amalgamated vague memories of Oriental wisdom, especially the hieroglyphic character of the Chinese alphabet, and contemporary Far East mania.

The chapter closes with a short survey of the Christian hermeneutics which distinguishes different senses in the Word, usually three or four. My research was not able to bind Swedenborg to any special source. Jakob Boehme (1575–1624) has often been suggested as a forerunner, but there are not cogent reasons to dispute Swedenborg's own assurance that he had never read him. That there still are many agreements between Swedenborg's Bible interpretation and a widely ramified tradition has not been doubted, but of the sources of information suggested by contemporary and modern writers there are none that are decisive. Nearest at hand seems to lie Origen's manner of paralleling the Word and man (the historical sense—the body, the moral sense—the soul, the spiritual sense—the spirit) but it must be emphasized that this often repeated correspondence could have reached Swedenborg without any patristic studies. For the layman at least, Swedenborg's own declaration of independence as Bible interpreter is confirmed.

The book closes with a rather extensive chapter on the doctrine of correspondence and Swedenborg's spiritual visions. In the beginning of the chapter it is stated that Swedenborg's reports from

the spiritual world are a disparate and extremely extensive collection of texts from more than twenty-five years. Here is contained the rapidly written down records from the turbulent dreams of the 1743–44 crisis, taken down in a pathetically tangled Swedish. Here recur immediate reports from spiritual world contacts in the many manuscript volumes with the title *Memorabilia*, 1747 to 1763 (*Diarium Spirituale*); a good 6500 annotations of changing length and, in general, taken down in Latin. Here we meet short glimpses of the author's spiritual experiences, strewn accidentally in the hermeneutic and theosophic text masses. Finally, there are the detailed, clearly demarcated and ambitiously elaborated *scènes de la vie spirituelle*, which reveal his pedagogic and perhaps even aesthetic intentions. Consequently, the present exposition cannot become more than a number of exemplifying analyses from a phenomenological viewpoint and takes no stand on the problem of Swedenborg's possible insanity.

The exposition is introduced with a review of how Swedenborg himself classified his visionary states of mind. After that, the *Journal of Dreams* 1743–44 is taken up with especial attention to the milieu and symbols of the dreams. The following section discusses the influence of the doctrine of correspondence on the book that was the immediate fruit of the religious crisis, *De Cultu et Amore Dei*, Swedenborg's drama of creation. In this, Swedenborg uses for the first and final time a few examples from *Clavis Hieroglyphica* which were then revised. The rewriting shows that he considered *Clavis* as a preliminary study. Moreover, the fact that he neither alludes to the mathematical background of the doctrine nor gives any references to the correspondence categories in the Scriptures, strengthens the impression that he felt hesitant about his attempts to systematize his doctrine up to now.

So much bolder and freer are the applications of the doctrine of correspondence in this work of poetic originality. The text renders an account of several dialogues between psychic personifications and the first human pair as well as some heavenly visions. The reader is forced to accept sudden scene-shiftings from a pure psychic level to the physical surroundings which may be difficult to follow. The original combination of freedom and systematization, which is the most distinctive consequence of the doctrine of correspondence in literary contexts, distinguishes also the theosophic descriptions from the spiritual world and, from this point of

view, the reading of the drama of creation is an excellent preparation for those who wish to become informed of the heavenly secrets in Swedenborg's version. But in his descriptions of these occurs a new situation which he himself considered decisive, namely, that his revelations lay claim to be reports *ex auditu et visu*. A leading theme in the following review of the visions becomes naturally, to scrutinize the quality of his claim through comparative studies.

Swedenborg's own annotations in the *Spiritual Diary* between 1747 and 1763, give a good foundation for such comparisons and a number of them have been investigated in *Arcana Coelestia* 1749–1756, *De Caelo* 1758, *De Telluribus in Mundo Nostro Solari* 1758, and the two short treatises on the Last Judgment (1758 and 1763). Special weight is laid with Swedenborg's original conception of the spiritual world as a *Maximus Homo*. The systematic presentation of this grandiose idea runs over seventeen sections in *Arcana*. The claims are enormous: he claims to make manifest *mysterium magnum*, which no one up to now knew anything about. His statement naturally does not imply a claim on historical originality in the sense that Adam Kadmon of the Cabbala or Plato's analogues between the human form and the state, or medieval and Renaissance microcosmic-macrocosmic parallels could be unknown to him. But he claims on good grounds that no one has striven as he has to interpret the universal play of forces in exclusively human correspondences. The flowing out of divine life in nature has, from the beginning, been the absolute postulate for human life in Swedenborg's thinking; what is now added is an extremely detailed systematization of how the process progresses beyond the borders that were earlier marked by auras and elements. Since the divine *influxus* must be supplied to the smallest fibres in the bodies of mortal beings, corresponding angelic societies are required down to the smallest particular. That means a hierarchy from both sources of motion, which are the heart and the lungs—the correspondence is the vertical division of heaven which resulted in a celestial and a spiritual region—down to the bones, skin, and hair—lowly societies at heaven's extreme boundaries with the intermediate world of spirits. The anatomical and physiological parallels mark the strongest conceivable connection with the bio-scientific works, and the excessive amount of them reveals a pedagogic hyper-ambition as well as the strong self-esteem of a learned man. But *Maximus Homo* is not only a consequence of the psycho-physical specula-

tions, but forms also the logical final step in a development introduced with *De Infinito* in 1734. In order to cover the abyss between the infinite and finite realities, Swedenborg took the *logos* idea of St. John as a *nexus* and a similar conception was expressed in the drama of creation (1745). In his earliest exegetic manuscripts, we meet the apostolic thesis on the church as Christ's bride and among the earliest notes in the *Spiritual Diary*, Swedenborg speaks of Christ's body as heaven. When his theological view was developed in its complete anthropomorphic boldness, Christ became nothing more than a *Divinum Humanum*, God's human aspect, and the prince of the world from *De cultu et amore Dei* and the earliest parts of *Adversaria* disappeared completely. As a *nexus* between God and man, spirit and nature, only the angelic societies function in the form of *Maximus Homo*. Perhaps the most important basis for this development towards simplification and humanization is the doctrine of correspondence which transformed the fibres and the membranes to representations of divine thought.

When we come to Swedenborg's fully developed memorabilia style—met in the last works beginning with *Apocalypsis Revelata* of 1766—the biological localization is, however, of almost no consequence for his visions. At this final stage, the doctrine of correspondence functions as the theory behind his landscape descriptions, his town milieus, his emblems, and his symbolic metamorphoses scenes. Very little of the complicated theoretical background comes forward in these poetically structured scenes and the connections with the idea of a universal language and with the mathematical speculations are not easy to discover. The scenes from the spiritual world are modern myths in imitation of a pedagogic practice in heaven and with their help Swedenborg tried to transform the abstract theses of his exegetic volumes into vivid emblems which became the fulfillment of his research program of 1734: to prove the immortality of the soul to the senses themselves.

Most of his mythology is naturally impressed with his constant reading of the Bible. The vaguely outlined spiritual spheres are filled out with Biblical plants and animals, and the Israelitic cult practices, and the visions of the prophets have been decisive for a number of details in clothing and architecture. But Swedenborg is not bound to this single source, just as little as he allowed his thought to be fettered with a single meaning of Biblical passages—the doctrine of correspondence does not always result in unam-

biguous interpretations but often distinguishes diametrically opposed senses of the same proposition. In the spiritual spheres, beyond time and space, the silent discussions with learned men from antiquity and the present age are transformed to lively debate scenes in which either Swedenborg himself develops his theses or allows the angels to present them. The doctrine of correspondence has given his fantasy free entrance to unknown worlds on which he could only speculate as a scientist, and has allowed him to listen to the reactions from the wise men of antiquity when they heard the latest news from the modern science gone astray. From classical myth and poetry, possibly also from tourist experiences of antiquity's remains, originates, not only the scenes that are directly localized to the heavenly Athens, but also a number of elements in his visionary milieu, his social ideals, and his use of symbols, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and Homer's and Virgil's descriptions of Hades are self-evident sources of Swedenborg's wanderings through subterranean tracts in the protection of guiding angels.

The reading of his memorabilia gives, however, the definite impression that all such impulses lay on a general plane; they indicate an early familiarity but are not the results of new studies. Swedenborg does not ground his doctrine of correspondence on the authority of the ancients, still less his descriptions of the life of the dead. In the last analysis, he remains a devoted pupil to modernity's great master, Descartes, who built a fundament for heaven and earth on his own psychic experiences. In Swedenborg's case, these experiences at the end included messages from a world beyond reason, but his manner of representing them is not that of the unconscious medium but quite the contrary. Within the widened framework, his intellect has unrestricted power, and he does not scruple to revise and change that which was said to originate *ex auditu et visu*.