Homo Maximus

Emanuel Swedenborg and the Interaction of Soul and Body

A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in History

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To Inge Jonsson †

(1928-2020)

Who met with me at the ‘castle of the ghosts’ in Stockholm at the end of his long life,
encouraged me to complete the present study, and discussed
Swedenborg’s ‘great secrets understood by very few’.

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Short Abstract

This thesis investigates the lifelong commitment of the Swedish parliamentarian, assessor of mines, and theologian Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) to the topic of soul-body interaction. It is a thematic intellectual biography, rooted in the history of science, religion and medicine, which places Swedenborg's life and work in the context of Swedish and Scandinavian society, politics and intellectual life. It provides a new narrative about why soul-body was so crucial to him, why it informed almost all of what he did, and why he pursued the topic within an impressively large array of disciplines and research projects across six decades.

My thesis revises a number of understandings about his life, ideas, intellectual interlocutors, and sense of self. First, it tracks his engagement with the soul-body theme earlier than previously thought, and argues that his famous turn towards theology actually occurred during his anatomical studies. This led him to pursue his soul-body work within an anatomically informed cosmological theology, which postulated that the afterlife as a whole constituted the spiritual grand body of God, that he named *Homo Maximus* ('the Grand Man'). Second, the thesis shows how Swedenborg relied on his understanding of the soul-body relationship to pursue various other goals; these consisted of attacking the orthodox conception of the doctrine of the Trinity, attempting to restore mankind's lost Adamic prelapsarian powers, criticizing absolutist monarchy, spreading his millenarian theology of works, and striving to prove the existence of God. In contrast to dominant historiography, the thesis demonstrates that his famous 'doctrine of correspondences' was only a by-product of a larger soul-body quest. It also shows how his soul-body research directly informed his conversations with the dead and his elaborate doctrines about the afterlife.

By doing so, the thesis produces a richly contextualised history of the soul-body problem during the Swedish Age of Liberty (*Frihetstiden*, 1718-1772). It demonstrates the wide variety of applications of early modern soul-body debates, from anatomy to chemistry, taxonomy, theology, epistemology, economics, and politics in a transnational, European and global context. More broadly, Swedenborg's late fame, and his innovative attempts to bring reason and revelation together show the need for a wider reassessment of his positioning within current scholarship on the religious Enlightenment.

Long Abstract

Emanuel Swedenborg died on 29 March 1772 in Clerkenwell, London. He had hoped to write one last study on the nature of the human mind (*De Mente Humana*) but died peacefully at the age of 84 before completing it. During a Grand Tour almost six decades earlier, he had produced his first study linked to the soul-body problem, the short manuscript *Voluntates et affectiones animorum hominum…* (*Inclinations of the mind*, 1714). By the time of his death, the retired assessor of mines turned clairvoyant theologian and millenarian prophet was recognised as the most famous (and controversial) Swede in Europe, along with his cousin Linnaeus. Although usually remembered for his sensational (and sensationalist) descriptions of the afterlife and conversations with the dead during the last twenty-five years of his life, Swedenborg spent his whole life researching the nature of the interaction between soul and body, in what seems to be the most crucial (if not the only) issue he truly cared about. I address the following questions: why was Swedenborg interested (if not obsessed) all his life with the interaction of soul and body? Why did his research always seem to refer back to the topic, even when he was deeply engaged in various other research programmes across his long, eclectic career(s)? This thesis represents the first extensive study of his protracted study of the problem, but it is also a broader study of early modern soul-body debates, their applications, features and wide-ranging disciplinary implications.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, soul-body debates encompassed a wide range of disciplines from anatomy to chemistry, taxonomy, theology, epistemology, economics, and politics. Far from being a technical debate restricted to the bounds of anatomy and theology, it was a vividly contested topic which involved a range of controversial issues, from the political government and management of the state,

economic interventionism, natural law, the nature of matter, divine incarnation, the Trinity, God's existence, and his nexus within Man.

Major figures of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, including Descartes, Locke, Newton, Leibniz, Wolff and Cheyne regarded the investigation of the human mind as a key to much broader areas of research. For example, such debates deeply informed political theologies which defended or criticised how kings ruled over the provinces of their kingdoms. In a century deeply concerned with unveiling the states and laws of nature and Man, discussions about how the 'soul of the nation' should rule the body politic were fiercely debated. If God had made Man in his image, then the study of mankind was necessary for understanding the being and attributes of God. Indeed, the early modern belief in the *imago dei* became one of the crucial foundations for soul-body debates in Swedenborg's time.

In Sweden, Swedenborg's own soul-body journey took a variety of forms. His first published research on the subject outlined a vibratory, iatromechanical model where the human soul was defined by various intensities of trembling. Inspired by the iatromathematics of Borelli, Baglivi, and the acoustic research of his mentor, the Swedish inventor Christopher Polhem, Swedenborg saw himself at that time (late 1710s-1720s) as a mechanist continuator of Descartes. His model was meant to explain cases of thought-transference and communication at a distance, powers that he would later claim to possess as a clairvoyant theologian chosen by God. Nevertheless, in the aftermath of the Great Northern War (1700-1720), the beginning of the new constitutional Age of Liberty (1718-1772) and the so-called Horn period of economic reconstruction in Sweden (1718-1738), his first soul-body research met with rejection in the scholarly circles of his home country. Barred from promotion and advancement in the Bureau of Mines for having bypassed its Board's authority through his friendship with Charles XII (1682-1718), Swedenborg refocused on his career as a mining and metallurgical expert. For ten years,

he struggled to obtain a full salary and a permanent ordinary position. By the early 1730s he had nonetheless become one of Europe's most esteemed experts in iron, copper, mining, and metal purification, being notably praised for his empirical experiments and his technical contributions to the industry. At the same time, in contrast to the spiritual-alchemical experiments of his colleagues at the Bureau of Mines, he grew increasingly dismissive of alchemy, discarding it as a vain quest for transmuting metals into gold, convinced it could only reveal little to harness the powers of the human soul.

Indeed, Swedenborg's manuscripts reveal that in private, he had continued to work on his soul-body research. Having eventually won back the trust of his colleagues, along with his job security within the bureau, he published a series of works which marked a transition from his works on the *Regnum Minerale* to the *Regnum Animale*, the reign of the human soul. During that period, he engaged extensively with the physico-theology of Christian Wolff, whose philosophy had become dominant in Sweden at the time. Wolff had reviewed Swedenborg's scientific works as early as 1722, and the two corresponded. Swedenborg's engagement with Wolffian physico-theology during this period is indicative of his profound desire to reconcile reason and faith. A new knowledge of the human soul, he claimed, would not only allow mankind to restore the prelapsarian powers associated with the lost Adamic soul-body coordination, but would also provide empirical evidence for the existence of God, a crucial goal in an increasingly impious world corrupted by materialism, sin, and atheism.

In recognition of the importance of his metal and mining expertise for the Swedish State at a time where iron and copper represented the country's most valuable commodities, Swedenborg obtained a number of leaves of absence to pursue his mineral works abroad. However, while on leave from 1735 onwards he actually retrained as an anatomist in Paris, visited Italy, and published a new series of soul-body works in Amsterdam. During his anatomical studies in France, Swedenborg most likely studied with French anatomist

Pourfour du Petit, and he dissected human and animal hearts, as well as a number of human brains. Some of his most original anatomical concepts – his notions of *cerebellula*, or theory of mini-brains within the brain up to the infinitesimal level of the soul, and the *albo sanguis*, an intermediary superior yet organic 'white blood' of the soul present within the red blood -- were based on phenomena observed during his anatomical training. In contrast with persisting scholarly narratives which have long presented him as a pure theorist with little practical experience (he defined himself as a 'superior analyst' with a gift for synthesis and interpretation), Swedenborg's early writings show that he was accomplished in dissection and strongly preoccupied with empirical observation.

Despite his extensive studies of the human brain, Swedenborg struggled to obtain recognition for his anatomical studies. Disillusioned with his anatomical career, he attempted to integrate his soul-body research into a wider cosmological theology, which he called *Homo Maximus*, the spiritual grand body of God. This new framework allowed him to use his soul-body research to produce extensive exegeses of the books of Genesis, Exodus, and Apocalypse, in a double quest for the soul of Man and the soul of Scripture. Yet, it also allowed him to develop a heterodox theology, critical of Trinitarianism and with an idiosyncratic understanding of divine incarnation. His notion of *Homo Maximus*, in which he blended doctrine, exegesis and 'memorabilia' (viz. conversations with spirits and descriptions of the afterlife) allowed him to showcase his doctrines as part of an integrated whole, and to place his own body as the source of access to this revealed knowledge. I show that Swedenborg promoted this new theology as an active prophet, who sought to recruit and maintain a network of religious followers to achieve maximum impact in the dissemination of his doctrines. His late fame as a heterodox religious reformer and exegete with sensationalist powers raised concerns precisely because of his influence over an impressive range of high-placed politicians and heads of State.

As his doctrines and followers were increasingly attacked during the last years of his life, Swedenborg spent time refining his account of soul-body interaction by reverting to his Cartesian roots, in a post-Wolffian context. His mature solution to the question, published less than three years before his death, asserted that the problems raised by Cartesian dualism would vanish if intermediary degrees could be taken into consideration. Far from being an abstract technical problem, he reasserted until his last days the importance of soul-body for emphasizing the interdependent relationship between Scripture and exegesis, between Christ and God, between charity and faith.

In this thesis I suggest that historiography on Swedenborg has focused disproportionately on his famous doctrine of 'correspondences' at the expense of his larger soul-body quest, mainly because of his later religious following and nineteenth century literary posterity. I show that his religious following also resulted in biographical narratives that were strongly shaped by devotional perspectives; these have directly reinforced the isolation of present-day Swedenborg scholarship from broader historical themes, reflected in his absence from current discussions of the Nordic Enlightenment and the Enlightenment more generally.

In contrast to Western Esotericism scholarship which has sought to place Swedenborg's work within the history of Hermeticism, Kabbalah, alchemy and Cambridge Neo-Platonism, I emphasise (along with Swedish scholars such as Inge Jonsson, Lars Bergquist and David Dunér) the debt of Swedenborg's research to Cartesian iatromechanism, and Leibnizian-Wolffian physico-theology. In a late Pietist-inflected shift in the 1750s, Swedenborg dismissed Wolffianism in favour of a renewed emphasis on a cosmological theology grounded in the body, informed by his anatomical studies on the brain, and the new status of his own body, predisposed by birth and miraculously transformed by God.

By doing so, this new thematic biography aims to allow historians to better position Swedenborg within broader Enlightenment scholarship. It shows how a study of his lifelong commitment to the soul-body problem expands our current understandings of the debate's importance during the eighteenth century, while also contextualising the lifelong efforts of one of the Enlightenment's most original and influential polymaths.

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Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used for citations. Spelling, capitalisation and italicisation follow the recommendations of the *University of Oxford Style Guide* (2016), while footnotes follow the recommendations of the *Oxford History Faculty Guide to Referencing and Citation* (2018).

Frequently cited works

Ryder, I-IV	*A Descriptive Bibliography of the works of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) by Norman Ryder*. Vol. I-IV (London, 2012-2017)
Acton, *Letters*, I-II	*Letters and Memorials of Emanuel Swedenborg.* Trans. ed. by A. Acton (Bryn Athyn, 1948-1955)
Tafel, *Documents*, I-III (I: vol. 1. II: vol. 2, part I; III: vol. 2, part II)	*Documents concerning the life and character of Emanuel Swedenborg*. Trans. annot. by R. L. Tafel (London, 1875-1877)

SBL	*Svensk Biografisk Lexikon*
Lexicon	*A Lexicon to the Latin Text of the Theological Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772)*. Ed. by J. Chadwick and J. Rose (London, 2010)

Frequently cited editions of Swedenborg's works

Miscellanea	*Miscellanea Observata* (Leipzig, 1722)	*Miscellaneous Observations connected with the physical sciences*. Trans. by C. E. Strutt (London, 1976)
Principia, I-II	*Principia Rerum Naturalium* vol. I-III (Leipzig, 1734)	*The Principia.* Trans. by A. Clissold. Vol. I-II (London, 1976)

De Infinito	*Prodromus de Infinito…* (Hague, 1734)	*The Infinite and the final cause of creation*. Trans. by J. J. G. Wilkinson (1992, London)
De Cerebro	*De Cerebro* (manuscript, 1738)	*Three Transactions on the Cerebrum*, vol. I-II. Trans. by A. Acton (Philadelphia, 1938)
OERA, I-II	*Oeconomia Regni Animalis*, vol. I-II (London-Amsterdam, 1740-1741)	*The Economy of the Animal Kingdom*, vol. I-II. Trans. by A. Clissold, (New York, 1919)
The Brain, I-II	*The Brain considered anatomically, philosophically and physiologically*, vol. I-II (London, 1882)	*The Brain considered anatomically, philosophically and physiologically*, vol. I-II. Trans. ed. annot. by R. L. Tafel (Bryn Athyn, 2005)

De Fibra	*De Fibra* (manuscript 1741-1743)	*Economy of the Animal Kingdom vol. III: the Fibre*. Trans. ed. by A. Acton (Bryn Athyn, 1976)
RA, I-III	*Regnum Animale*, vol. I-III (Hague-London, 1744-1745)	*The Animal Kingdom, considered anatomically, physically and philosophically*, vol. I-II. Trans. by J. J. G. Wilkinson (Boston, 1960)
Generation	*Anatomia Corporis* (manuscript, 1743)	*The Animal Kingdom parts 4 and 5: the Organs of Generation*. Trans. ed. by A. Acton (Philadelphia, 1912)
Five Senses	*De Senso Communi* (manuscript, 1744)	*The Five Senses*. Trans. by E. S. Price (Bryn Athyn, 2006)

Notebook	*Varia Philosophica et Theologica* (manuscript, 1741-1744)	*A Philosopher's Notebook.* Trans. ed. by A. Acton (Bryn Athyn [1931] 2009)
De Cultu	*De Cultu et Amore Dei,* part. I-II (London, 1745)	*The Worship and Love of God.* Trans. by A. Stroh and F. Sewall (London, 1996)

Swedenborg's theological works

AC	*Arcana Coelestia*
AD	*Adversaria* / *Explicatio in Verbum Historicorum Veteris Testamenti*
AE	*Apocalypsis Explicata*
AM	*Delitiae Sapientiae de Amore Conjugiali*
AR	*Apocalypsis Revelata*
AS	*Sapientia Angelica de Divino Amore et de Divina Sapientia*
AT	*De Athanasii Symbolo*
CC	*De Commercio Animae et Corporis*
CI	*De Coelo et ejus Mirabilibus, et de Inferno*
CV	*Colloquia cum Calvino*
CO	*Coronis seu Appendix ad Veram Christianam Religionem*
DA	*De Divino Amore*
DD	*Doctrina Novae Hierosolymae de Domino*
DO	*De Domino*
DP	*Sapientia Angelica de Divina Providentia*
EA	*De Equo Albo*
ES	*Experientiae Spirituales*
FI	*Doctrina Novae Hierosolymae de Fide*
HE	*Historia Ecclesiastica Novae Ecclesiae*

MI	*De Miraculis*
NE	*Invitatio ad Novam Ecclesiam*
NH	*De Nova Hierosolyma et ejus Doctrina Coelesti ex auditis e coelo*
SA	*De Divina Sapientia*
SE	*Summaria Expositio Doctrinae Novae Ecclesiae*
SS	*Doctrina Novae Hierosolymae de Scriptura Sacra*
SS(P)	*De Scriptura Sacra seu Verbo Domini [posth.]*
TE	*De Telluribus in Mundo nostro Solari*
UJ	*De Ultimo Judicio*
UJ(C)	*Continuatio de Ultimo Judicio*
UJ(P)	*De Ultimo Judicio [posth.]*
VI	*Doctrina Vitae pro Nova. Hierosolyma*
VR	*Vera Christiana Religio*

Introduction

I. Swedenborg, the human soul, and the soul-body problem

In 1771, the 83-year-old assessor Emanuel Swedenborg, the most famous (and controversial) Swede in Europe along with his cousin Linnaeus, published the last volume of his milestone testament *Vera Christiana Religio*, in which he outlined the definitive doctrines of his millenarian church of the New Jerusalem, based on Revelation 21:2. One of the most important truths it contained, he wrote, was that 'The Divine and the Human are united in the Lord, like the soul and the body'.[1] Swedenborg died the following year on 29 March 1772 in Clerkenwell, London, having vainly hoped to complete one last soul-body study, *De Mente Humana*, whose title echoed his very first manuscript on the topic (from almost sixty years earlier) *Voluntates et affectiones animorum hominum…* (*Inclinations of the mind*, 1714).

Why, at the twilight of his long life, did Swedenborg still feel the need to write about the interaction between soul and body? Why did he regard the matter as such a crucial question, at a time when his doctrines were being attacked in the last major heresy trial in Sweden? Why did he choose to defend himself in 1769 by publishing a summary of his theology, specifically centered on the soul-body problem?[2] Why did his interest in the soul-body relationship span more than six decades, featuring in disciplines as varied as mechanics, mathematics, metallurgy, physics, astronomy, anatomy, philology and theology? By answering these questions, I aim to show why and how Swedenborg's lifelong engagement with the soul-body question was central to a wide range of his concerns. I also demonstrate that his work, sense of self, and intellectual development cannot be understood without his relationship to the soul-body problem; more broadly, I

[1] VR, §98:1, §107:1 and §154:6. See also AT, §30:5.
[2] E. Swedenborg, *De Commercio et Animae Corporis* (London, 1769).

place Swedenborg's engagement with the topic as part of a broader concern with unravelling the issue during the eighteenth century.

Most of Swedenborg's early publications on the human soul were released as anatomical treatises informed by theological concerns, before he repurposed his research within his broader theological cosmology of the *Homo Maximus* ('the Grand Man'), in which he reframed the afterlife as the spiritual macrocosmic body of God. Such a wider religious reframing built on anatomy, although highly original and idiosyncratic, was by no means unusual at the time. In his landmark monograph *The Anatomical Renaissance* (1997) Andrew Cunningham demonstrated how early modern anatomy as a whole was actually a mere corollary to a wider, religiously-motivated quest to find the human soul. Western anatomy, he showed, 'was essentially about the soul. […] all systematic anatomizing was and had been about the soul. Every anatomist up to and well beyond the sixteenth century looked at the body as being, in one way or another, the instrument of the soul, and if they were interested in anatomizing it, it was because it was the instrument of the soul'.[3] Anatomy, Cunningham contended, "showed God in action; it was not a secular activity nor one which led to a secularizing world-view. The soul was all-important: as the medical students shouted at Padua in the 1550s: 'We want the soul!'".[4] An avid reader of the great Renaissance anatomists, Swedenborg himself desired nothing more than to be the one to unveil the elusive empirical existence of the human soul, which the Paduan anatomists had been so eagerly seeking for two centuries.

In this thesis I will challenge the outdated narrative of a brutal shift and discontinuity between Swedenborg's 'scientific' and 'theological' periods in the mid-1740s, by focusing on his long-lasting obsession with the soul-body problem. As this thesis will show, he had started to write on the nature of divine incarnation as early as 1733. The

[3] A. Cunningham, *The Anatomical Renaissance* (Aldershot, 1997) p. 196.
[4] Cunningham, *Anatomical Renaissance*, p. 268.

following year, his physico-theological manifesto on the nature of God, soul-body and the infinite (1734) tried to combine reason and revelation, while his anatomical oeconomy of the human soul (1740) relied on biblical support to advocate the use of rational faith when facing lack of empirical evidence. As we will see, Swedenborg's quest for the soul was from the outset a means to prove the existence of God, out of concern for what he feared was an increasingly dark and faithless world, corrupted by misbelief, sin, materialism and atheism.

Although Swedenborg himself pursued the soul-body question early on for openly religious reasons, he also engaged with the topic from a wide variety of disciplinary perspectives. As I show throughout the thesis, he incorporated the subject as a side project within various research programmes, showcasing a wide variety of uses for the problem, which, I argue, reflected the wider deployment of the soul-body relationship during the eighteenth century. The ramifications of the question were so wide-ranging that it remained a topic of constant contention from the sixteenth to the long eighteenth century, engaging disciplines as diverse as theology, natural law, epistemology, anatomy, linguistics, alchemy, economics, physics, botany, taxonomy, and politics. Indeed, during the Scientific Revolution the breadth of subjects influenced by the soul-body debates widened further, as radically new conceptions of the cosmos led to novel understandings about the relationship between the divine and the creation.[5] Debates between vacuists and 'plenists' raised the question of the attributes and extension of God, spiritual substances and the human soul.[6] Soul-body debates showcased explanations about what Man and God were, along with how they were related to each other, from Adam to Christ, and the whole of mankind. Carried by a strong Augustinian revival within the Protestant world,

[5] A. Funkenstein, *Theology and the Scientific Imagination from the Middle Ages to the Seventeenth Century* (Princeton, 1985) pp. 23-9.
[6] R. Iliffe, *Priest of Nature: The Religious Worlds of Isaac Newton* (Oxford, 2017) p. 87. Alexandre Koyre, *Du Monde Clos à l'Univers Infini* (Gallimard, 1973), pp. 159-68.

restoring the lost prelapsarian powers of the human soul became one of the major scientific pursuits of the early modern period.[7] Within such a quest, major figures like Newton established the exploration of the human mind as one of the crucial foci of their studies.[8]

However, soul-body research aimed at more than countering the physical, epistemological and spiritual corruption brought by original sin. The topic also became a tool of social and political reform, which allowed discussion of how the bodies of kings were one with the kingdoms which they ruled, and as a consequence, how monarchs, the souls of their nations, should rule over the body-politic.[9] I argue in this thesis that Swedenborg's soul-body views were partly informed by such political analogies, as his doctrine of the powers of the 'passive' soul kept under control by the lower substances of the body echoed his own championing of the parliamentary dominance which characterised the post-absolutist constitutional order of Sweden during the Age of Liberty.

Such political parallels were by no means peculiar: from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century, connections between the body, the king, the soul, and God were ubiquitous, while the metaphor of the body-politic featured prominently on the intellectual stage, from Descartes's *Principia Philosophiae* (1644) to the titlepage of Hobbes's *Leviathan* (1651).[10] The trope continued to provide a pervasive and fertile ground for political commentary across the eighteenth century.[11] For example, the political theologies

[7] P. Harrison, *The Fall of Man and the Foundations of Science* (Cambridge, 2007) pp. 3, 6, 8.
[8] Iliffe, *Priest*, p. 105.
[9] K. Sennefelt, 'A Pathology of Sacral Kingship: Putrefaction in the Body of Charles XI of Sweden', *Past and Present*, 253(1) (2021), p. 87. See also S. Shapin, 'Of Gods and Kings: Natural philosophy and Politics in the Leibniz-Clarke Disputes', *Isis*, 72(2) (1981), pp. 187-215; F. Oakley, 'The Absolute and Ordained Power of God and King in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: Philosophy, Science, Politics, and Law', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 59(4) (1998), pp. 669-90.
[10] K. Banks, 'Interpretation of the Body Politic and of Natural Bodies in Late Sixteenth-Century France' in A. Musolff and J. Zinken (eds), *Metaphor and Discourse* (London, 2009) pp. 205-6. A. D. Harvey, *Body Politic: Political Metaphor and Political Violence*. (Newcastle, 2007) pp. 35-6.
[11] A. de Baecque, *The Body Politic: Corporeal Metaphor in Revolutionary France, 1770-1800* (Stanford, 1997).

outlined in the Leibniz-Clarke correspondence challenged the extent to which a monarch ought to intervene in the affairs of the kingdom, based on how much (or little) the soul intervened in the life of the human body.[12] Despite Swift's scathing satire of the subject in his *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) the body-politic remained a central feature of several of the Enlightenment's most famous works, from La Mettrie's *L'Homme Machine* (1748) to Rousseau's *Du Contrat Social* (1762).[13] The accounts of freethinkers, deists, and materialists -- which either denied the existence of the soul or declared it unnecessary for the human body to function -- not only threatened the existence of God and the moral order of society, but also questioned the natural legitimacy of monarchical power.[14] Such radical challenges to political authority percolated into the millenarian, political landscape which characterised the French Revolution, and served to undermine the *Ancien Régime* monarchy.[15]

Soul-body research not only provided political applications, but also a number of models for addressing the management of profit and wealth, notably in terms of the relations between the government of nature and the government of the body that underpinned the economic doctrine of 'Physiocracy'.[16] Supported by Enlightened *philosophes* such as Quesnay and Mirabeau, Physiocrat writings drew on the Harveian circulation of the blood to make claims about the natural circulation of wealth.[17] French Revolutionary ideals in the 1790s similarly drew from vitalist circulatory notions ranging from anatomy to botany, as exemplified by the revivifying sap of the revolutionary 'trees of liberty'.[18]

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[12] Shapin, *Of Gods and Kings*, pp. 199, 211, 214.
[13] Harvey, *Body Politic*, pp. 36-8.
[14] Shapin, *Of Gods and Kings*, pp. 199, 211.
[15] C. Garrett, *Respectable Folly: Millenarians and the French Revolution in France and England* (Baltimore, 1975). See also de Baecque, *Corporeal Metaphor*.
[16] J. Riskin, *Science in the Age of Sensibility: The Sentimental Empiricists of the French Enlightenment* (Chicago, 2002) pp. 106-21.
[17] F. Quesnay, *Physiocratie, ou constitution naturelle du gouvernement le plus avantageux au genre humain* (Leyden, 1767), and M. Sonenscher, 'Review article: Physiocracy as a theodicy', *History of political thought*, 23(2) (2002), p. 332.
[18] G. Pacini, 'Une Sève Nouvelle et Pure: Tree Sap and the Regeneration of the Nation in French Revolutionary Discourse and Practice', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 53(3) (2020), p. 422.

Overall, in a century so focused on the quest for natural law, debates about the interaction between the soul and body speculated on natural and therefore apparently optimal forms of political government and wealth management drawn from the study of nature and the human body. The topic more than ever touched on profound metaphysical and theological issues, such as the nature of divine incarnation, the existence of God, the nature of the divine, and its nexus within Man. It was a topic with crucial ramifications for Christian doctrine, which nevertheless drew on even older classical philosophical traditions harking back to Plato, Aristotle and the ancient Greeks (to mention only the Western world). The medieval period, from Aquinas to Avicenna, made major contributions to the topic. Hence, when early modern scholars, who were so concerned with comparisons between the ancients and the moderns, formulated their own contributions to soul-body debates, there was an extensive tradition and polymorphic literature to draw upon. Everybody did it (although everyone did it differently). It is therefore unsurprising that someone as devout and intellectually curious as Swedenborg developed a lifelong engagement with this crucial and multi-faceted topic.

Swedenborg's research on the soul-body question was situated in a scholarly landscape in which it was widely held that there were three main competing systems: Aristotelian scholasticism, Cartesian-Malebranchian occasionalism, and Leibnizian-Wolffian pre-established harmony. Although they were abstruse, the ability to summarise such systems eloquently became a popular challenge and topic of discussion in literary salons. The soul-body question was undoubtedly the thorniest and indeed greatest problem of the time, a question on which every learned individual had to form an opinion, be it serious or (prudently) witty. There were of course, variations of those systems, and extensive disagreements about what they really meant.

Alternative models were attacked mercilessly, as famously exemplified by Leibniz's attacks on Newton's *sensorium* of God, the idea that space was an organ 'which God

makes use of to perceive things by'.[19] Leibniz not only dismissed Newton's soul-body views as naïvely anthropomorphic: he saw them as dangerously redolent of the one-substance materialist monism of Spinoza, widely associated with atheism. Although Swedenborg never ventured as far as to attribute to God's physical presence his ability to perceive events that took place in the cosmos, he nevertheless believed the 'spiritual world' to be structured as a macrocosmic human body, an original contribution to a still widespread trope of Man as microcosm and *imago dei* (Gen. 1:27). In this thesis I argue that Swedenborg's *Homo Maximus* was in part a rationalist actualization of older micro-macro cosmologies, albeit expunged from most of their traditional astrological and alchemical references. More broadly, it was rooted in Pietist spiritual readings of bodily functions and pains, in anthropomorphic understandings of religious communities as the spiritual body of Christ, and in his own anatomical studies on the soul-body nexus. Finally, it was intimately bound up with his own sense of spiritual transformation, epistemic enhancement, and bodily regeneration, all of which were completed during the mid-1740s.

The sedimentation of soul-body debates into the ternary division described above led to the emergence of a quest to coin a 'fourth system' which would provide the long-sought solution to an apparently insolvable conundrum. Voltaire satirised the three systems as an overdone trope in his philosophical tale *Micromégas* (1752); if there was a fourth system, he suggested, it was to be found in John Locke whose views won his endorsement.[20] One radical alternative was commonly identified with mortalist positions about the carnally perishable nature of the human soul, or even worse, its non-existence, thus leading to atheism and materialism.[21] In this latest category fell radically materialistic systems such

[19] H. R. Bernstein, 'Leibniz and the Sensorium Dei', *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 15(2) (1977), p. 171.
[20] Voltaire, *Micromégas* (Paris, 1970), pp. 49-51.
[21] Shapin, *Of Gods and Kings*, p. 199. For a wider study of mortalist positions, see M. Pfeffer, *Mortalism and the making of heterodoxy in seventeenth-century England* (PhD thesis, University of Queensland, 2020).

as La Mettrie's *L'Homme Machine*. The intractability of the soul-body problem led to a number of works that asserted the soul's non-existence, a trend which, already in the 1730s, became a matter of concern to devout individuals such as Swedenborg. It is within the context of such criticisms that this thesis will explore Swedenborg's own Cartesian take on the soul-body problem, and its evolution from vibratory iatromechanics to an account based on Leibnizian-Wolffianism in the 1730s and 1740s. As we will see, after briefly coining his own system as an improved version of Leibniz's pre-established harmony, Swedenborg later saw his soul-body model as an update of Cartesianism which remedied its problematic dualism by creating intermediary degrees, and which he renamed as the doctrine of spiritual influx. The final step of this evolution was his concept of the *Homo Maximus*, which sought to bridge Cartesian dualism by postulating the existence of intermediary degrees of existence and physicality. The formulation of this doctrine coincided with the decline in popularity of mechanistic models across the eighteenth century, and the rise of new models, from the Montpelier vitalism to Encyclopedist 'sensibilism', Hallerian 'irritability' and 'animal electricity'.[22]

II. Historiography: from Kantianism, Swedenborgianism, and Western Esotericism, to the Religious Enlightenment

By conducting a major reassessment of Swedenborg's treatment of the soul-body problem and of what the problem encompassed more generally, I place Swedenborg's original statements on reason and revelation within broader scholarship on what has recently been termed the religious Enlightenment. In doing so, I highlight how a thematic study of his interest in soul-body can more broadly challenge our established categories about science, religion and secularization during the eighteenth century. Although a

[22] Riskin, *Sensibility*, p. 1-3, 106-21; P. H. Reill, *Vitalizing Nature in the Enlightenment* (Berkeley, 2005) pp. 255-6; S. Gaukroger, *The Collapse of Mechanism and the Rise of Sensibility* (Oxford, 2010) pp. 389-90; T. Brown, 'From Mechanism to Vitalism in eighteenth century English physiology', *Journal for the History of Biology*, 7(2) (1974) p. 179; H. Steinke, 'Die Ehre des Rechthabens: Experiment und Theorie im Streit um die Lehre von der Irritabilität', *Sudhoffs Archiv*, 82(2) (1998), p. 141.

significant amount of scholarship has focused on Swedenborg's later reception, comparatively little has been written on his more immediate impact during the eighteenth century. This has led Swedish scholar David Dunér to state that 'what has been written about Swedenborg has been overshadowed by everything which has been written about the reception of Swedenborg'.[23]

Such a situation has, to a substantial degree, arisen first because it is widely held that Swedenborg's contribution to the history of epistemology and metaphysics was successfully challenged by Immanuel Kant's *Aufklärung* philosophy. Modern commentators have largely agreed with, or at least been profoundly influenced by Kant's attacks against Swedenborg in *Träume eines Geistersehers* (known in English as *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*, 1766). The 'taint' of Kantianism on Swedenborg's reputation has endured despite the fact that Kant's own philosophy was initially built both as a reaction to and in dialogue with Swedenborg's ideas.[24] As we will see in the fifth chapter, Kant's attacks initially exerted little impact on Swedenborg's reputation upon their publication.[25] I suggest that current perceptions of Swedenborg within general scholarship have been profoundly shaped by the historiographical dominance of Kantianism within the modern history of philosophy. As a result, and despite considerable fame during the second half of the eighteenth century, Swedenborg's contributions to broader debates have been minimised, while he himself has been relegated to the margins of mainstream Enlightenment narratives. The Kantian taint has placed various enduring constraints on Swedenborg scholarship, and in reaction to Kant's attacks, traditional Swedenborgian

[23] D. Dunér, *The Natural Philosophy of Emanuel Swedenborg, A study in the conceptual metaphors of a mechanistic world view* (Dordrecht, 2013) p. 12.
[24] On Swedenborg's influence on Kant, see G. Florschütz, *Swedenborg's Hidden influence on Kant* (Bryn Athyn, 2014); G. Johnson, *Kant on Swedenborg: Dreams of a spirit seer* (West Chester, 2002). On Swedenborg's doctrines long perceived as being dismissed by Kant, see Johnson, *Dreams*, xiii and A. Hessayon, 'Jacob Boehme, Emanuel Swedenborg and their Readers' in S. McNeilley (ed.) *Philosophy, Literature, Mysticism: an anthology of essays on thought and influence of Emanuel Swedenborg* (London, 2013), p. 339.
[25] V. Roy-Di Piazza, 'Ghosts from Other Planets: Plurality of Words, Afterlife and Satire in Emanuel Swedenborg's De Telluribus in Mundo Nostro Solari (1758)', *Annals of Science*, 77(4) (2020), p. 22.

studies have tended, as noted by Ariel Hessayon, to emphasise denominational developments at the expense of broader historical contexts.[26]

Following Swedenborg's death in London in 1772, some of his religious followers organised themselves into a body that became known as New Church Swedenborgianism.[27] This group has exerted an extraordinary influence in the producion and dissemination of literature on Swedenborg's life and ideas. Since his death, confessional scholars have painstakingly worked to edit, classify, order, and translate his published and unpublished writings with religious devotion and attention. Dedicated editors and commentators such as Rudolph Leonard Tafel, Alfred Stroh, James John Garth Wilkinson, Alfred Acton, James Hyde, John Chadwick, John Elliott, and recently, the late Norman Ryder produced remarkable corpora of translations, edited works, and dating/ordering of his manuscripts, letters and works. Their scholarship demands respect and commands admiration, allowing historians and laymen alike to navigate the vast and rich corpus of Swedenborg's published and unpublished writings. Nevertheless, confessional Swedenborgianism also played a pivotal role in pushing a narrative about Swedenborg shaped by religious commitment, which meant that scholarly discourses were traditionally nurtured with, or expected to fit, certain narratives rooted in longstanding devotional standpoints. As a result, a number of studies that were held to deviate from orthodox positions were untranslated, self-censored, or unpublished.[28]

Despite this, there have been attempts in recent years from secular historiographical schools to associate Swedenborg with various currents at the margins of the Enlightenment. For the last twenty years, scholars exploring the religious aspects of the

[26] Hessayon, *Readers*, p. 338.
[27] D. Duckworth, *A Branching Tree: A Narrative History of the General Conference of the New Church* (London, 1998) pp. 35-62.
[28] Inge Jonsson avoided translating his milestone study *Swedenborgs Korrespondenslära* (Stockholm, 1969) into English, fearing it 'would upset a lot of people'.

Enlightenment have been gradually reappraising the role and epistemic value of figures long considered to be on the margins of the canon of elite philosophers. The long-lasting notion of a homogeneous secular Enlightenment has been challenged since the 1960s through a number of dialectic or pluralistic models positing the existence of alternative religious or non-secular Enlightenments. This has resulted in more attention being paid to marginalised voices and groups within which Swedenborg has been included retrospectively, due to his historiographical isolation. Although the moniker 'religious Enlightenment' has only come into common scholarly use relatively recently, the idea that religious and Enlightenment values were not mutually exclusive, or further, the claim that religious commitments underpinned much early Enlightenment discourse, has a longer history.

In the 1960s, while Peter Gay promoted the idea that the Enlightenment heralded the beginning of modern European secular culture, other scholars such as Hugh Trevor-Roper argued that the roots of the Enlightenment were essentially religious.[29] The gradual fragmentation of the Enlightenment landscape was pursued in the 1970s by Isaiah Berlin, who coined the controversial notion of a (primarily German) 'counter-Enlightenment'; this led to further essays and books that explored the opposition to Enlightenment ideals, perceived by many early modern actors as threats undermining the religious, social and political order. Such scholarship, expanded by scholars such as Brian Young and Darrin McMahon, has come with a welcome focus on less prominent voices and historiographical sources.[30] Building on Berlin's 'counter-Enlightenment' model, the idea of a variety of Enlightenments was sown and proved popular for scholars such as Roy

[29] P. Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation I: The Rise of Modern Paganism* (New York, 1966). On Trevor-Roper, See J. Robertson, 'Review of H.R. Trevor-Roper, Religion, the Reformation and Social Change, and other Essays (London, 1967)', *The English Historical Review*, 124(511) (2009), pp. 1389-421. For a wider summary of Enlightenment historiography since the 1960s, see J. Whaley, 'Review of The Religious Enlightenment: Protestants, Jews and Catholics from London to Vienna by David Sorkin', *History*, 94(3:315) (2009), pp. 393-4.
[30] B. Young, *Religion and Enlightenment in Eighteenth Century England: Theological Debate from Locke to Burke* (Oxford, 1998) pp. 120-2; D. McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment, The French Counter Enlightenment and the making of modernity* (Oxford, 2001).

Porter, who promoted the notion of multiple parallel Enlightenments, shaped by different national and, to a certain extent, confessional contexts.[31]

Introducing Sweden onto the Enlightenment stage with reference to the work of historian Tore Frängsmyr, Porter's argument proved influential for Swedenborg scholarship, as the trend of multiple Enlightenments later blossomed into studies of non-secular Enlightenments at the margins, described as 'covert', 'occult', 'mystical', 'theosophical', 'hermetic' or 'esoteric'.[32] Swedenborg became a central figure within the alternative narratives set by such studies, although they often tell us more about the retrospective reconstructions of modern scholarship than about Swedenborg himself or how he was perceived during his lifetime. An example of the limitations of such reconstructions lies in Alfred Gabay's attempt to make Swedenborg one of the most prominent figures of a 'covert Enlightenment', a heterogeneous constellation of millenarians, mystics, clairvoyants, freemasons, and animal magnetisers during the long eighteenth century.[33] The common denominator between such diverse figures allegedly lay in their 'countercultural' positioning (voluntary or not), a thesis that was based in no small part on the ideas of the prominent historian of Western Esotericism Wouter Hanegraaff. According to this approach, the overarching category of 'Western Esotericism' (in which Swedenborg is frequently included) concerns what Hanegraaff views as *rejected* philosophical and religious knowledge repudiated by powerful orthodox elites which preserve the integrity of their own doctrines by rejecting certain ideas and practices as deviant or heretical.[34]

[31] Whaley, *Review*, p. 393. See also T. Frängsmyr, 'The Enlightenment in Sweden' in R. Porter and M. Teich (eds.), *The Enlightenment in National Context* (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 164-75.
[32] C. Garrett, 'Swedenborg and the Mystical Enlightenment in Late Eighteenth-Century England', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 45(1) (1984), pp. 67-81; J. Godwin, *The Theosophical Enlightenment* (New York, 1994); A. Gabay, *the Covert Enlightenment: 18th century counterculture and its aftermath* (West Chester, 2005); P. Kleber Monod, *Solomon's Secret Arts: the Occult during the Age of Enlightenment* (New Haven, 2013).
[33] Gabay, *Covert Enlightenment*.
[34] W. Hanegraaff, *Esotericism and the Academy: rejected knowledge in Western culture* (Cambridge, 2012).

However, in this thesis I argue that such models promoting the existence of alternative forms of 'esoteric' Enlightenment(s) are unhelpful, and provide a distorted image of Swedenborg's life and ideas. They effectively reduce him to the most heterodox elements of his thought, while associating him with figures he influenced and/or with whom he had little in common. This reframing of Swedenborg's intellectual work has in turn contributed to increase his long-standing scholarly isolation from wider Enlightenment debates, while providing little actual explanation for the development of his views.

Other recent attempts to reclassify Swedenborg's theology have situated it within the contested current of 'Enlightenment Illuminism', with scholars such as Christine Bergé hailing Swedenborg as one of the 'two great founding heroes of Illuminism', along with German mystic Jacob Boehme.[35] An intrinsically heterogeneous category, Illuminism has been tentatively defined as an open approach to 'non-conformist sources of knowledge', coupled to a syncretic form of 'psychology avant la lettre'.[36] Although this definition partially fits Swedenborg's interest in the study of the soul and body, it remains unclear whether it actually explains anything about Swedenborg himself, his followers or his critics. Another aspect of Illuminism has been described as the pursuit of politically-reformist 'masonic' agendas, infused by syncretic religious-mystical components.[37] However, much like Gabay's covert Enlightenment, such a *potpourri* definition is not without its own misleading associations. Swedenborg's masonic initiation has, for instance, long been debunked as a myth, while his rationalist approach to revealed knowledge only became popular in high-grade freemasonry in both Sweden and France after his death.[38]

[35] C. Bergé, 'Illuminism' in Hanegraaff (ed. et als), *Dictionary of Western Gnosis and Esotericism* (Leiden, 2006) p. 604.
[36] A. Önnerfors, 'Illuminism' in C. Partridge (ed.), *The Occult World* (New York, 2015) pp. 173-81. On Illuminism see also M. Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans* (London, 1981).
[37] Önnerfors, *Illuminism*, p. 175.
[38] Tafel, *Documents*, III, pp. 735-9. See also Hessayon, *Readers*, pp. 353-6.

Such difficulties in classifying Swedenborg highlight unresolved tensions between his self-fashioning during his lifetime, his reputation within contemporary heterodox and radical religious milieus, and the historiographical categories upheld by modern day historians.[39] In a recent attempt to resolve labelling tensions, the Swedish historian Andreas Önnerfors emphasised how figures allegedly belonging to the Illuminist spectrum frequently sought to avoid pejorative monikers such as 'occult', 'theosopher', 'magicians' or '*illuminés'*, preferring more respectable titles such as 'philosopher' and 'theologian'.[40] Such a tendency certainly fits the case of a heterodox reformer like Swedenborg, who sought to insinuate his ideas into the mainstream rather than be pushed to the margins of philosophical and religious discourse. Such terms are only useful when they are actors' categories rather than retrospective terms deployed by interested historians. They were not expressions that Swedenborg used about himself; indeed, as a highly independent thinker his writings rather exemplify the tendency of many radical writer of the eighteenth century who refused to define themselves or their work in terms of contemporary categories.

Another example of this discrepancy lies in how Swedenborg's theology has often been classified by scholars as a form of 'Christian theosophy', a Protestant movement inspired by the writings of Boehme, despite significant differences in features and context between the two figures.[41] This creates a number of problems, and historians such as the late Antoine Faivre who supported the concept of early modern 'Christian theosophy' conceded that, if Swedenborg indeed belongs to such a current, he does so by standing as its most peculiar and unrepresentative member.[42] Despite such an unsatisfying classification, many Swedenborg scholars continue to use the term 'theosophy' when

[39] Hessayon, *Readers*, pp. 342-4.
[40] Önnerfors, *Illuminism*, p. 178.
[41] A. Faivre, 'Christian Theosophy', in Hanegraaff (ed. et als), *Dictionary of Western Gnosis and Esotericism*, (Leiden, 2006) p. 265.
[42] Faivre, *Theosophy*, p. 265.

referring to Swedenborg's theology, often as a loose shortcut to highlight the 'mystical' character of his Christian theology, and the alleged similarities of such a perspective with Behmenism. Other scholars of Western Esotericism such as Jocelyn Godwin and Marsha Keith Schuchard have been criticised for their promiscuous use of the term when discussing Swedenborg's religious doctrines.[43] Indeed, more rigorous recent assessments of the category have concluded that it is incoherent.[44]

As noted by Lars Bergquist, Swedenborg himself never used the term 'theosophy' in any of his writings, and his association with the term stemmed exclusively from his followers at the very end of his life. Two years before his death, his last treatise on the interaction of soul and body (*De Commercio Animae et Corporis*, 1769) was translated rather freely in English by his follower Thomas Hartley under the title *A Theosophical Lucubration on the Nature of Influx* (1770).[45] Similarly, the first society devoted to the study of his doctrines was founded ten years after his death in London, and called itself the 'Theosophical Society'.[46] This highlights the syncretic propensity of Swedenborg's followers, who read him alongside Boehme and various other sources, drawing freely on the elements which resonated most with their beliefs.

The task of situating Swedenborg's life and work within their proper historical settings has been helped in recent year by the provision of much more sophisticated accounts of the relationship between Enlightenment and religion.[47] For example, David Sorkin's

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[43] Godwin, *Theosophical Enlightenment*, and M. Keith Schuchard, *Emanuel Swedenborg, Secret Agent on Heaven and Earth: Jews, Jacobites and Freemasons in early modern Sweden*. (Leiden, 2011).

[44] For references to Swedenborg's 'theosophy', see e.g. M. Lamm, *Swedenborg and the development of his thought* (West Chester, 2000), pp. 108 and 150; L. Bergquist, *Swedenborg's Secret* (London, 2005) xiii ; I. Jonsson, *A Drama of Creation: Sources and Influences in Swedenborg's Worship and Love of God* (West Chester, 2004) xiv ; N. Goodrick-Clarke, *The Western Esoteric Traditions* (Oxford, 2008) p. 155. On not including Swedenborg in early modern theosophy, see W. Hanegraaff, 'Jacob Böhme and Christian Theosophy', in Partridge (ed.), *The Occult World* (New York, 2015) p. 126.

[45] Hessayon, *Readers*, p. 349.

[46] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 431. This led early Swedenborg scholars such as Lamm to describe Swedenborg's theology as a 'theosophy'.

[47] See e.g. Reill, *Vitalizing Enlightenment*, p. 252 and J. G. A. Pocock, 'Historiography and Enlightenment: a View of their History', *Modern Intellectual History*, 5(1) (2008), p. 84.

transnational and transconfessional religious Enlightenment provides a promising basis for scholars seeking to place Swedenborg's idiosyncratic philosophy within a broader Enlightenment context. Sorkin's *Religious Enlightenment* described a range of syncretic attempts to achieve middle-ground philosophical, confessional and political positions across Europe, which failed to resolve the growing tensions between Christianity and modern ideas of secular liberty.[48] Although Sorkin's study excluded Scandinavia, his account of German Pietism and Wolffianism highlighted potential commonalities between Swedenborg's writings and those of reformist, syncretic philosopher-theologians such as Siegmund Jacob Baumgarten.[49] More useful contexts for situating Swedenborg's work in its proper settings have recently been adduced in Ritchie Robertson's study of the *Aufklärung* in a German-Austrian religious context.[50] In line with this growing body of research on the religious Enlightenment, I argue that a reconsideration of Swedenborg's impact, positioning, and ideas allow us to reassess the religious nature of the Swedish Enlightenment and the Enlightenment in general.

In Sweden, such an assessment remains long overdue. In 2005, Swedenborg's manuscripts in Stockholm became part of the UNESCO 'Memory of the World' list, a decision which coincided with a renewal of interest amongst Swedish scholars in Swedenborg's natural-philosophical works.[51] This period witnessed the appearance of a new series of Swedish studies about Swedenborg which followed the republication of foundational works from early scholars Martin Lamm (2000 [1915]) and Ernst Benz (1999 [1948]). The great studies of Inge Jonsson (1999, 2004), Lars Bergquist (2001, 2005) and David Dunér (2004) provided much needed eighteenth-century context to

[48] D. Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment, Protestants, Jews, and Catholics from London to Vienna* (Princeton, 2008), p. 115.
[49] Sorkin, *Religious Enlightenment*, p. 115-63.
[50] R. Robertson, *Enlightenment and Religion in German and Austrian Literature* (Cambridge, 2017).
[51] K. Grandin (ed.), *Emanuel Swedenborg – Exploring a "World Memory"* (Stockholm, 2013), p. 8.

Swedenborg's life and writings.[52] Nevertheless, these works did not seriously engage with broader Enlightenment scholarship, and as a result, failed to capture the attention of readers beyond the scope of Swedish scholars, confessional Swedenborgians, and Swedenborg specialists.

This situation was also partly due to ongoing debates over the essence and timing of the 'Swedish Enlightenment' in Swedenborg's home country. In the 1980s, Tore Frängsmyr had made the influential claim that the Swedish Enlightenment only began in the early 1770s, with the rule of absolute Swedish king Gustav III (who reigned 1772-1792).[53] Gustav III's return to absolutism is traditionally seen as marking the end of the *Frihetstiden* (the Age of Liberty, 1719-1772), a period of parliamentary dominance in Swedish history that coincided almost exactly with Swedenborg's career (1718-1772). As a result, Swedenborg found himself chronologically excluded from the dominant timeframe of Frängsmyr's late 'Gustavian Enlightenment'. Historians have since pointed out that Frängsmyr's interpretation was built on a largely Francocentric, secular understanding of the Enlightenment that has been challenged by wider scholarship.[54] Swedish scholars such as Arne Jarrick and Jakob Christensson have further challenged Frängsmyr's narrative, arguing that to limit the Swedish Enlightenment to the Gustavian period and its French-inspired expression ignores the many activities commonly associated with the Enlightenment that occurred during the *Frihetstiden*.[55] These took

[52] Lamm, *Development*; Ernst Benz, *Emanuel Swedenborg: Visionary Savant in the Age of Reason* (West Chester, 1999); I. Jonsson, *Visionary Scientist: the effect of science and philosophy on Swedenborg's cosmology* (West Chester, 1999); Jonsson, *Drama*, D. Dunér, *Världsmaskinen: Emanuel Swedenborgs Naturfilosofi* (Nora, 2004); L. Bergquist, *Swedenborg's Dream Diary* (West Chester, 2001), and Bergquist, *Secret*.

[53] Frängsmyr, *Enlightenment in Sweden*, pp. 164-75.

[54] A. Jansson and H. Falk, 'Religion i det svenska idéhistorieämnet – Översikt och reflektion', *Lychnos: Lärdomshistoriska samfundets årsbok* (2017), pp. 75-95. A. Kraus, 'Nordlichter der Vernunft oder die Aufklärung in Skandinavien' in A. Kraus and A. Renner (eds.), *Orte eigener Vernunft – Europäische Aufklärung jenseits der Zentren* (Frankfurt, 2008), pp. 86-105; M.C. Skuncke, 'Was There A Swedish Enlightenment' in S. Sigmundsson (ed.), *Norden och Europa 1700-1830 – Synvinklar på ömsesidigt kulturellt inflytande* (Reykyavik, 2003), pp. 25-41.

[55] J. Christensson, *Lyckoriket – Studier i Svensk Upplysning* (Stockholm, 1996); A. Jarrick, 'Visst fans det en upplysning i Sverige!' in R. Ambjörnsson (eds. et als), *Upplysningen i periferin* (Umeå, 1998), pp. 13-27; J. Christensson, 'Scandinavia' in Charles Kors (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment* (4 vols., Oxford, 2005).

place in the context of the continuing restrictions placed on questioning theological authority that Frängsmyr considers as evidence against a prominent Enlightenment at the time.

Such activities were, as this thesis will show, associated with the dominance of Wolffianism in Sweden and epitomised in the wide applications of soul-body debates during the period. Jakob Christensson has contended that Wolffianism dominated in Sweden until the 1770s before giving ground to Kantianism during the 1790s.[56] Nevertheless, an examination of Swedenborg's writings hints at an earlier demise in the authority of Wolffian philosophy. Like many disgruntled Lutherans with Pietist proclivities, Swedenborg abruptly transitioned from praising Wolff as his biggest influence to recasting him in the mid-1750s as a faithless materialist spirit who had actually never believed in religion.[57] I argue that Swedenborg's accounts of the afterlife and discussions of the soul-body question during the period appear closely tuned to the philosophical and confessional debates of the time, and reflect widely-shared views by moderate Pietists and spiritual reformers in Sweden.

It is because of the coincidence between Swedenborg's career and the Swedish Age of Liberty that my intellectual biography also provides a new thematic history of the period, and hints at how a fresh study of Swedenborg's considerable influence sheds light on various overlooked aspects of the history of the Enlightenment. More broadly, the thesis will show how historically-marginalised figures like Swedenborg can be reclaimed by broader Enlightenment scholarship by challenging long-standing historical categorizations. Such an approach, combining historiographical analysis, manuscript sources and interdisciplinary positioning, will hopefully lead to further studies exploring the impact of Swedenborg across the Enlightenment landscape, and bring fresh

[56] Christensson, *Scandinavia*, p. 4558.
[57] See ES, §6049:3 and §4744:3. See also TE, §38.

contributions to the field of eighteenth-century studies, in a global perspective informed by his transnational posterity, his links with Linnaeus, and his missionary ambitions.

III. Methodological remarks, terminology

Although in this work I aim to make a contribution to the historiography of Swedenborg's life and work, and also to the historiography of the Enlightenment in Sweden, my arguments rest on firm empirical and archival foundations. The resources used for this thesis include translated editions, first editions, reproductions, and originals of Swedenborg's extant correspondence; his unpublished documents and manuscripts, travel diaries, registers of his presence in various places, published reviews of his works in his lifetime, and other letters, manuscripts and published works discussing him and/or his ideas. Translations of Swedenborg's words are mine or from the translators of the editions listed in this bibliography. For the dating and referencing of Swedenborg's works (both published and unpublished), I follow unless specified otherwise the naming and chronological ordering established by Norman Ryder, based on the previous research of James Hyde. The only notable exception to this policy is my choice to refer to Swedenborg's famous *Dream Diary* (also known as *Swedenborg's Drömmar* or *Drömboken* in Swedish) as the 'Scheringson manuscript', a neutral title which I derived from the patronym of its discoverer. As detailed in the third chapter, I argue that the manuscript's categorization as a 'dream diary', first assigned by the archivist G. E. Klemming (1823-1893), is a misleading moniker which obscures the manuscript's overlooked similarities with Swedenborg's later diaries of his *experientiae spirituales*.

Regarding terminology, I will refer in this thesis to the topic of the interaction between soul and body as a 'problem', a 'question', a 'debate' and a 'discourse', thus reflecting the wide variety of approaches to the topic during the early modern period. I also use the terms 'interaction' and 'coordination' instead of the dated (and confusing) 'commerce'

redolent of the Latin *commercio*. Although I rely on those two different terms, I do not use them indifferently, and rely on the term 'coordination' in contexts where the soul is discussed as functioning in closer relation with the body.

Another frequently overlooked terminological issue is the distinction between the 'soul-body problem' and the 'mind-body problem'. Conflations between the soul and the mind often originate from modern discussions of the topic from the perspective of philosophy of mind or cognitive humanities. However, in an eighteenth-century context, they were widely perceived as two different notions, with the mind being included within the wider soul-body debate. Moreover, as a subdivision of the human soul (*anima*), the mind (*mens*) has sometimes been seen as composed of intermediary notions which have not survived in our common language, such as the *animus*, a lower part of the mind concerned with the lower bodily (*corpus*) part of Man's needs, instincts and cravings. As I will show, Swedenborg himself distinguished between all those different notions.[58] Because of this, I include the so-called 'mind-body problem', along with early modern debates about the nature of the human 'mind', and the emergence of Wolffian 'proto-psychology' within the broader scope of soul-body debates.

Finally, this dissertation relies as much as possible on actors' categories, and tries to avoid the unwarranted use of retrospective historiographical terms. As I have suggested earlier, such categories include Illuminism, 'theosophism' and 'mysticism', which are all ambiguous terms which not only explain little about what Swedenborg thought he was doing, but have further served to conflate him with traditions he had little in common with. Another term I avoid is 'telepathy' (a connoted nineteenth-century term) to refer to his interest in soul-transference. I also use the term 'physiognomy' carefully, noting that despite Swedenborg's interest in face-reading, he himself associated the term to

[58] For a concise definition of *anima*, *animus*, *mens*, and *corpus* in Swedenborg's writings, see *Lexicon*, pp. 22, 23, 268, and 87.

divination and superstition. I use terms such as ‘science’ and ‘research’ for convenience, not to imply anachronistic conditions. In line with Hjalmar Fors’s recent history of the *Bergscollegium* (Chicago, 2015), I use the term ‘Bureau of Mines’ as a translation for the former, which enables to distinguish the institution from the ‘Board of Mines’, viz. its executive and governing committee.[59]

[59] H. Fors, *The Limits of Matter: Chemistry, Mining and Enlightenment* (Chicago, 2015), pp. 14-5.

Chapter I

Trembling membranes, metals, and the infinite (1710-1734)

Introduction

This first chapter examines the first phase of Swedenborg's soul-body research, in the context of his role in the development of practical science in Sweden during the Great Northern War (1700-1721) and his training and networks during his Grand Tour across Europe (1710-1715), along with his struggles for career advancement and scientific fame. In this context, the chapter shows how his very first forays into the topic of the soul-body relationship were influenced by mechanistic models based on harmony, 'trembling' and action-at-a-distance. In these early works, Swedenborg drew on his senior collaborator, the famous Swedish inventor Christopher Polhem, and the tradition of Cartesian iatromechanism. I show how he linked this work to the question of non-verbal communication, which was related to the representation of intentions and emotions on the face, and I explore his connection to contemporary research into 'physiognomy'. I examine the political context surrounding his nomination (1716) to the Bureau of Mines of Sweden (*Bergscollegium*), and his difficult rise as a mining expert with growing influence during the Horn period of economic reconstruction (1719-1739). His growing authority was also tied to his ennoblement from Swedberg to Swedenborg, which allowed him to sit in the Swedish House of Nobles, the *de facto* ruling chamber of the Swedish quadricameral parliament during the Swedish Age of Liberty (*Frihetstiden*).

In the context of those activities, I look at Swedenborg's relationship to alchemy, and I challenge previous claims that this exerted any significant influence over his soul-body theories. The chapter also highlights the importance of mathematics and geometry in his

metaphysics, along with the influence of Christian Wolff on the physico-theological treatise *De Infinito* (1734), Swedenborg's first major soul-body work. The chapter shows how in this work, Swedenborg developed his theory of matter and outlined his views of the divine and its abridgement in man, in a first ambitious treatise heralding a much larger series of work entirely devoted to the study of the human soul. Most of his lifelong ideas about soul-body interaction were outlined in this work, and would be developed further in the productive decade to come (1735-1745).

I. Formative years, travels and first ventures into the soul-body problem (1688-1718)

a) Family background and first exposure to anatomy and medicine

'God with us' is the Hebrew meaning of Emanuel, a name given to Swedenborg by his father at his baptism in the historic Jacobs Kyrka, a central Stockholm church (still standing today) so that his son could 'perpetually remember the presence of God', and the 'holy, secret union' with him through faith.[1] Such a name seemed well-chosen for the future prophet of the millenarian New Jerusalem.

Emanuel Swedenborg (who was born with the family name Swedberg, until he and his siblings became ennobled in 1719) was born in Stockholm on 29 January 1688, the third child and second son (out of nine children) of Lutheran pastor, court chaplain and theology professor at Uppsala Jesper Swedberg (1663-1735), the famous bishop of Skara (1702-1735), psalmist and dean of Uppsala university.[2] Swedenborg's father was an influential man with known Pietist leanings, who, in line with German proto-Pietist Christian Scriver (1629-1693) believed in the constant presence of angels, with whom he

[1] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 16.
[2] Swedenborg's siblings were: Albrecht (1684-1696), Anna (1686 - ?), Hedwig (1690-1728), Daniel (1691-1691), Eliezer (1692-1717), Catharina (1693- ?), Jesper (1694- ?) and Margaretha (1695- ?). London, Swedenborg Society, *Dufty Documents*, doc. 2.

claimed to interact regularly. The angels, Jesper Swedberg recorded in his memoirs, even recommended various theological readings, from the German Lutheran hymnodist Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676) to the Polish-German Socinian Johann Crell (1590-1633).[3] The son of wealthy *Bergsman* (viz. miner and mine owner) Daniel Isaksson, Swedenborg's father had gained trust from former king Charles XI by never refraining from calling upon others to uphold higher morals, and never shying away from religious controversy. When serving as dean of Uppsala, Jesper Swedberg even became accused of heresy and of seeking to establish a separate religion for his views on Christ as a Son of Man rather than the Son of God, a view which Swedenborg himself picked up and upheld until the end of his life.[4] These kinds of things, it seems, ran in the family.

Swedenborg's childhood was marked by the death of his mother Sara Behm (1666-1696), herself a daughter of Bureau of Mines assessor Albrecht Behm. Following his mother's death, he witnessed eleven days later the death of his older brother Albrecht. His father then remarried, to Sara Bergia, a wealthy widow of a judge, who consolidated the family's assets and whom Swedenborg described as a 'second mother'. The Swedberg family had a long tradition in theology and mining, and although they were not part of the nobility, they still belonged to the educated one percent of the Swedish population at the time. [5] Jesper's bishopric entitled him to an ecclesiastical seat in the House of Priests of the Swedish parliament, and his political influence was linked to the wealth that flowed from the family's mining estates in Darlana at a time where metals (especially iron and copper) represented Sweden's main commodity. [6]

The family had moved to Uppsala when Emanuel was four, and there he was taught by his cousin, iatromechanist physician-in-training Johan Moraeus (1672-1742) who

[3] Benz, *Visionary Savant*, p. 6.
[4] C. Odhner Sigstedt, *The Swedenborg Epic: The Life and Works of Emanuel Swedenborg* (London, 1981), p. 5.
[5] J. Williams-Hogan, 'Sweden: the seventeenth century setting', *New Philosophy*, 111(4) (2008), pp. 653, 660-1.
[6] Williams-Hogan, *Sweden*, p. 653, 660-1. On metals, see p. 655.

provided him with his first exposure to anatomy, physiology and the human body.[7] Moraeus acted as an early role model for Swedenborg. Described as one of the 'smartest and happiest Swedish *medicis*' of his time, Moraeus jointly studied in Uppsala while acting as a preceptor for Swedberg's children. After pursuing his studies in Leiden, Paris and Reims as a physician and pharmacist, he would eventually be deemed a Swedish 'successor of Boerhaave'. [8] Moraeus's dissertation at Uppsala also showcased his interest in alchemical literature, which he upheld during his tenure as city physician in the mining town of Falun.[9] With his combined interests in metallurgy, iatromechanics and anatomy, Moraeus's teaching proved to be an inspiration for Swedenborg, who later studied anatomy while being employed as an assessor at the *Bergscollegium*, the Swedish Bureau of Mines. Like his pupil, Moraeus eventually became one of early members of the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences, but also Linnaeus's father-in-law, thus making Swedenborg and Linnaeus cousins by marriage. [10]

Swedenborg's father Jesper spared no expense on the education of his children, and Emanuel struck him as a quick child with a strong appetite for learning, interested in theology yet not particularly religious.[11] Jesper's descriptions of his son later appeared at odds with Swedenborg's own accounts of his childhood, as the latter described himself as a pious child whose 'thoughts were constantly occupied with God, salvation and the spiritual conditions of men', a child who prayed while holding his breath and made his parents 'wonder and think that angels must be speaking through my mouth'.[12] When his father was appointed bishop of Skara in the rural region of Västra Götaland in 1702, the young Emanuel remained in Uppsala. From this point on, he lived for seven years with

[7] *SBL*, 'Johan Moraeus'.
[8] *SBL*, 'Johan Moraeus'.
[9] *SBL*, 'Johan Moraeus'.
[10] *SBL*, 'Johan Moraeus'.
[11] Benz, *Visionary Savant*, p. 21.
[12] Benz, *Visionary Savant*, p. 21.

his older sister Anna and her husband, the humanist scholar Eric Benzelius the younger (1675-1743), who acted as his mentor.

More will be said on Swedenborg's early education during later analyses of his soul-body views. In the meantime, it suffices to say that he developed a strong interest in classical literature, graduating in classical philosophy from the University of Uppsala in 1709, with a dissertation that offered commentaries on aphorisms from Seneca to the witty Latin poet Publilius Syrus the Mime. The work demonstrated his outstanding talent and showcased his precocious fondness for Latin rhetoric, literary exegesis, and stinging aphorisms.[13] Following his successful disputation in the large Gustavian auditorium at Uppsala on 1 June 1709, the 22-year-old graduate returned to his father's home in Brunsbo in the diocese of Skara, playing out on the local church organ his boredom and frustration at being prevented from travelling to Europe for his Grand Tour. His departure had been planned since May 1709, yet had been delayed for more than a year because of Sweden's dire position in the Great Northern War (1700-1721); this deadly twenty-year conflict brought to an end the Swedish 'Age of Great Power' (*Stormakstiden*), following a triple alliance of Denmark, Saxony and the Russian Empire (1672-1725).[14] His project of departure followed the disastrous Swedish campaign in Russia (1707-1709) that was led by the absolutist warrior-king Charles XII and ended by the Swedish defeat at Poltava (28 June 1709), a setback that saw the king flee in exile to the allied Ottoman Empire until 1714.

Swedenborg eventually seized an opportunity to embark for London from Gothenburg in the summer of 1710. His journey saw him sail towards what became a five-year Grand Tour through England, the United Provinces, France and the Holy Roman Empire. In

[13] E. Swedenborg, *Selected Sentences from L. Annaeus Seneca and Publius Syrus the Mime with Notes submitted by Emanuel Swedenborg in 1709*, trans. A. Acton, ed. B. G. Briscoe (Bryn Athyn, 1967), pp. 1-66.
[14] Jesper Swedberg petitioned chancellor Horn for his son's passport on 22 May 1709. *Dufty Documents*, doc. 28.

spite of the preoccupying circumstances surrounding his journey, the young Swedenborg was eager to travel and to acquaint himself with some of the great philosophers of the age, and it was during this unusually long peregrination that he outlined his first research on the interaction between soul and body.

b) Grand Tour (1710-1715) and agent of the *Collegium Curiosorum*

In contrast to later travels in his life where he was rumoured to always benefit from supernatural good fortune when sailing, Swedenborg's first journey abroad was plagued by difficulties.[15] His boat almost got stranded on a sand bank and had to pass through both Danish and French ships, because Louis XIV had imposed a maritime blockade on Queen Anne's Britain.[16] Although Sweden was allied with France (and as a result, supported the Jacobite cause in Britain) Swedenborg's boat was still mistakenly fired upon by the British and even attacked by Danish pirates masquerading as French corsairs.[17] Such an event marked him for life, and he would later be haunted by visions of pirates with horrible teeth who delighted in the 'fetid smell of urine' and whom he claimed, were doomed to special hells smelling 'like carcasses of cows and sheep'.[18] On arrival in the Port of London, Emanuel's boat was subjected to quarantine due to the Great Northern War plague outbreak in Sweden, which claimed an estimated 100,000 lives in the country from 1710 to 1713.[19] He ill-advisedly followed a group of Swedes onto land but got caught, only escaping hanging due to the intervention of the Swedish ambassador in London Carl Gyllenborg (1679-1746). Gyllenborg was a rising Swedish

[15] For later accounts of Swedenborg as a favoured sea voyager, see Sigstedt, *Epic*, pp. 328-9.
[16] J. Murray, 'Sweden and the Jacobites in 1716', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 8(3) May (1945), pp. 259-76.
[17] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 3
[18] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 4. On a late memory of this early attack, see VR §380:4; on urine see AC, §820, §3387.
[19] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 768 mentioned that Swedenborg's boat quarantined in Harwich. However, he most likely landed (illegally) at Allhallows in Kent, then rode to Gravesend, then presumably by ferry to London. For reference to the plague, see A. Marklund, *Stenbock: ära och ensamhet i Karl XII:s tid* (Lund 2008), pp. 208-12.

political figure who supported the Jacobite cause in Britain, a fellow of the Royal Society and future leader in parliament of the Swedish Hat opposition party.[20]

During his two years in London, Swedenborg became immersed in the ecclesiastical networks of his father, which frequently intersected with the diplomatic circles of the Swedish legation. He worshipped and socialised at the London Swedish Church, which was funded by Swedish iron merchants and had just gained its independence from the German Lutheran church by renting a house on Ratcliffe Highway.[21] The Swedish community in London was placed under the episcopal authority of Jesper Swedberg, who also oversaw the spiritual welfare of Swedish communities in Portugal and the Americas. The young Swedenborg was sometimes tasked by his father to meet with various clergymen involved in joint religious and diplomatic ventures, such as the Swedophile bishop of Bristol and diplomat John Robinson (1650-1723), a former chaplain of the British embassy in Stockholm who had lived in Sweden for almost thirty years, befriended Charles XII, and had the motto of his coat of arms written in Nordic runes.[22] Emanuel commissioned Robinson on behalf of his father to translate into English an account of a Swedish maid named Estrid, who had reportedly not eaten in six years and had visions of spirits, a case confirmed by Swedish general Magnus Stenbock (1665-1717) who frequently visited her for military omens.[23] The Estrid case not only demonstrates persistent beliefs in seers at the beginning of the eighteenth century, but also the perceived tactical advantage provided by such powers to the struggling Swedish army in dire times of war. This must have made a strong impression on Swedenborg, who would later in his life be consulted as a seer by many prominent Swedish politicians,

[20] Acton, *Letters*, I, p.11. On Gyllenborg's involvement in British Jacobitism, see *SBL*, 'Carl Gyllenborg'. On Gyllenborg's FRS, see S. Schaffer, 'Swedenborg's Lunars', *Annals of Science*, 71(1), (2014), p. 6.
[21] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 11. 'R. Highway' is now called the 'Highway' in the East End of London.
[22] On the Swedenborg-Robinson meeting, see Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 16-7.
[23] J. Robinson, *Estrid: an account of a Swedish maid, who hath lived six years without food, and hath had, of God during that time, strange and secret communications…* (London, 1711).

while closer to Estrid's case, he later celebrated Stenbock's victory over the Danes at Helsingborg in March 1710 in his *Ludus Heliconius* poems (1715).[24]

Apart from those activities, he displayed a strong interest in mechanics, poetry, the longitude problem and Newtonian philosophy. Such scholarly pursuits were facilitated by an early invitation to formally serve as a corresponding and travelling agent for the first Swedish society of practical sciences, the *Collegium Curiosorum*, founded in 1711 in Uppsala by the famous Swedish inventor Christopher Polhammar (1661-1651, ennobled as Polhem in 1716) and Eric Benzelius.[25] This opportunity made Emanuel a junior peer of the founding members of the *collegium*, which included some of the most famous scholars of Sweden at the time. Amongst them were the astronomer Per Elvius the elder (1660-1718), anatomist and philologist Olof Rudbeck the younger (1660-1749), the professor of medicine Lars Roberg (1664-1742), the Skyttean professor of eloquence Johan Upmarck-Rosenadler (1664-1743), the mathematics professor Harald Vallerius (1646-1716) and his two sons, mineralogist Göran Vallerius (1683-1744) and mathematician Johan Vallerius (1672-1718), the latter of whom soon succeeded his father Harald to the mathematics professorship in 1712.[26] Professorial dynasties and family unions were common within the small world of Swedish scholarship: the Rudbeck, Linnaeus, Swedberg-Swedenborg, Benzelius, Celsius and Elvius families were all related to various degrees.[27] Swedish friends of Emanuel during his time in London were linked both to the Swedish church and to the Collegium. His circle of close friends included Uppsala theology graduate Sven Bredberg (1681-1721), students Jacob Ludenius and Martin Hegardt, the new pastor of the London Swedish church Olof Norberg (1681-1745)

[24] H. Helander, *Ludus Heliconius and Other Latin Poems by Emanuel Swedenborg*, trans. and ed. Hans Helander (Uppsala, 1995), p. 85.
[25] Helander, *Ludus Heliconius*, p. 227.
[26] H. Ellegren, *Hvad nytt och nyttigt-Tillkomsten av landets första lärda sällskap: Kungl. Vetenskaps-Societeten I Uppsala* (Uppsala, 2019) p. 60.
[27] Ellegren, *Hvad nytt*, p. 283. Per Elvius referred to Emanuel as his cousin, since his brother Lars Elvius had married Swedenborg's cousin Margareta Schönström. Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 25.

appointed by Emanuel's father, and Eric Alstrin (1683-1762), nephew of *Collegium Curiosorum* member Johan Upmarck-Rosenadler (1664-1743).[28]

During his Grand Tour, Emanuel fulfilled various missions for the college, such as purchasing astronomical instruments and books for its members, and facilitating the diffusion abroad of their publications.[29] Swedenborg's activities for the college came with significant costs, and he lamented chronic underfunding. Swedenborg had expressed a great desire to meet the now sexagenarian Isaac Newton, who at the time served actively as Master of the Royal Mint, presided over the Royal Society, and devoted the rest of his time to chronological and private theological studies in which he exhibited strong anti-Trinitarian views.[30] Yet, it seems that Swedenborg, who claimed he was reading Newton *'*daily' at the time, failed or gave up on trying to meet the famous scholar, pleading insufficient fluency in English.[31] Through the course of his three-year stay in England, Swedenborg seemed to have grown disillusioned with what he perceived as the almost cultic nature of Newtonianism in the country; indeed he arrived at the onset of the disputes between Leibniz and Newton that encompassed infinitesimal calculus, politics, natural philosophy, theology and in particular, the interaction between soul and body.[32] Alluding to the controversy, he deplored how English scholars regarded any criticism of Newton's doctrines as a 'crime'.[33] Newtonianism had not been particularly well-received in Sweden and was still criticised heavily by Uppsala scholars, such as the astronomy professor and fellow *Collegium Curiosorum* member Per Elvius.[34] Swedenborg's disillusionment with various features of Newtonianism played a part in his

[28] Dunér, *Natural Philosophy*, p. 7; Ellegren, *Hvad nytt*, pp. 9, 281 and J. Orrje, 'Vardagens Kuriositeter: Eric Alstrin's besök i England vid 1700-tallets början', in E. Andersson and E. Stenback (eds.) *Böckerna i borgen. Ett halvsekel i Roggebiblioteket* (Stockholm, 2018), p. 108.
[29] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 23.
[30] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 13. See also R. Iliffe, 'Newton and the Money Men, *Nature*, 462(5) Nov. (2009), pp. 39-40.
[31] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 13.
[32] Shapin, *Of Gods and Kings*, pp. 187-221.
[33] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 33.
[34] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 26.

subsequent lifelong embrace of Cartesian physics and anatomy, which were then still dominant in Sweden.

c) Dreams of fame and glory: Oxford, Paris and the longitude problem

During his Grand Tour, Swedenborg unsuccessfully tried to coin a new method for the determination of the longitude at sea based on lunar tables.[35] He had a longstanding interest in the longitude project, which became closely entangled in the 1720s with his broader astronomical views. Later on, the topic became connected with his understanding of the soul-body relationship, as his astronomical knowledge informed his afterlife ideas about time, space and 'spiritual longitude' as the 'heavenly good' within the grand body of God.[36] In the competitive context of the reward later formally set by the Longitude Act of 1714, the ambitious Swede failed not only to account for various issues related to refraction, lunar ecliptic and parallax, but also to obtain reliable lunar tables from the English Astronomer Royal John Flamsteed (1646-1719) when visiting the latter in his observatory in Greenwich.[37] Swedenborg's longitude efforts more broadly took place in a context of raging disputes between Flamsteed and the combined attempts from Newton and Edmond Halley to seize Flamsteed's Greenwich observatory.[38]

Swedenborg would soon meet Flamsteed's rival in Oxford, the Savilian Professor of Geometry Edmond Halley to whom he dedicated his later publication exposing his longitude method, *Forsök at finna östra och westra lengden...* (Uppsala, 1718).[39] Halley's house in Oxford, with its small observatory on the roof, stood right by Hart Hall (now Hertford College, Oxford) where experimental philosophy was taught.[40]

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[35] Schaffer, *Lunars*, p. 4.
[36] Schaffer, *Lunars*, pp. 25-6.
[37] Schaffer, *Lunars*, pp. 24-5.
[38] Schaffer, *Lunars*, p. 5.
[39] Dunér, *Natural Philosophy*, p. 54.
[40] From 1714 onwards, experimental philosophy was taught at the Ashmolean Museum, now the History of Science Museum, Oxford. See L. S. Sutherland and L. G. Mitchell (eds), *The History of the University of Oxford, vol. 5: The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 660 and 674.

Swedenborg remained in Oxford for six months, from January to July 1712.[41] His known interlocutors during this period included the librarian John Hudson (1662-1719) a correspondent of Benzelius (who had conducted research in Oxford in 1699-1700) and Hudson's assistant Thomas Hearne, himself acquainted with the famous Uppsala archivist.[42] The Great Northern War exerted an obvious impact on the nationalities of Scandinavian visitors at Oxford: during the period 1699-1721, only twelve Swedes came as visiting students, in contrast to thirty-eight Dano-Norwegians, including Ludvig Holberg in 1706.[43] The Swedish theology student Martin Hegardt (1685–1732) joined Swedenborg in Oxford in July 1712, and the latter dedicated a Latin poem to his 'Oxford friend', remembering their time and interests in the city of dreaming spires.[44]

During this period, Swedenborg attended various lectures at the University and studied in the Bodleian Library, although the list of books he consulted is not extant.[45] He likely attended popular paid lectures open to foreigners in Newtonian physics and chemistry by the Savillian professor of astronomy John Keill during Trinity term 1712 (Keill's predecessor, Hart Hall vice-principal John Caswell, was too ill to teach during Hilary term, and died on 28 April 1712).[46] During the Easter break, Swedenborg followed lectures by John Theophilus Desaguliers, who like Caswell and Keill, also taught at Hart Hall.[47] Swedenborg would later reflect on Desagulier's experiments on sight and refraction in discarded materials devoted to the five human senses that were related to his unpublished soul-body treatise.[48] Oxford was finally also the place where Swedenborg

[41] His own father Jesper had visited Oxford in 1683.
[42] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 35.
[43] Oxford, Bodleian Library, Library Records e. 534, pp. 19-31.
[44] Helander, *Ludus Heliconius*, pp. 96-101.
[45] Oxford, Bodleian Library, OUA/NEP/supra/RegBgg, p. 69. See also Library Records e. 534. For a transcription of his registration at the Bodleian, see *Dufty Documents*, doc. 45.
[46] Sutherland and Mitchell, *History of Oxford*, p. 890.
[47] Sutherland and Mitchell, *History of Oxford*, p. 671. Desaguliers asked for a leave during Trinity term 1712, see OUA/NEP/supra/RegBgg, p. 70.
[48] *Five Senses*, xi.

most likely familiarised himself with the works of John Wilkins which, as we will see, would soon nourish his initial soul-body researches.

Later during his Grand Tour, Swedenborg was welcomed warmly in Paris by the secretary of the Académie Royale des Sciences, the abbot Jean-Paul Bignon (1662-1743), who was a personal friend of Eric Benzelius.[49] Swedenborg hoped that the French would be more receptive to his efforts, and that Bignon would help him present his longitude method to the French Académie des Sciences, although the latter never obliged. Swedenborg further corresponded with the astronomer and Collège Royal mathematics professor Philippe de la Hire (1640 –1718) who, like Bignon, expressed scepticism about the Swede's method, pointing out that Giovanni Domenico Cassini (1625-1712) had coined a similar method a couple of years earlier.[50] The failure to be recognised as one of the pioneering solvers of the longitude problem vexed Swedenborg throughout his life, and in the twilight of his years in 1766, he still tried (unsuccessfully) to obtain recognition for his solution from the Royal Society, after hearing that the lunar tables he had so eagerly sought fifty years earlier were about to be printed by Nevil Maskelyne.[51] The Swedish astronomer Pehr Wilhelm Wargentin pointed out that Swedenborg had not kept himself updated on the subject for the last thirty years and noted sarcastically that 'one might expect better from a man who knows *arcana coelestia* and can ask the spirits about everything'.[52] However, even in his old age, Swedenborg confidently claimed -- with the same stubborn pride of his youth -- that 'as soon as these ephemerides are constructed, the correctness of the method will appear'.[53] He would display the same obstinate drive on the soul-body problem.

[49] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 47.
[50] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 48. See also Dunér, *Natural Philosophy*, p. 54.
[51] Schaffer, *Lunars*, p. 14.
[52] Dunér, *Natural Philosophy*, p. 56.
[53] Schaffer, *Lunars*, p. 25.

d) An education in politics: Europe, treaty of Utrecht and studies in Paris

From December 1712 until May 1713, Swedenborg travelled to the United Provinces to cash his bills of exchange and join the personnel of the Swedish legation during the treaty of Utrecht, which brought an end to the Spanish War of Succession (1700-1714). The negotiations represented an opportunity for the young Swede to familiarise himself more thoroughly with the arcana of Swedish diplomacy and to learn more about politics, following recommendations from Benzelius and his father.[54] During his time in Utrecht and the Hague he stayed and conversed every day with Swedish ambassador *extraordinarius* Johan Palmqvist (1652- 1716), who held him in 'great favour' and shared with the young Swede a strong interest in algebra. Palmqvist was assisted by Secretary Joachim Preis (1667-1759), a friend of Swedenborg who had studied (without formally enrolling) at Leiden, Cambridge and Oxford.[55] During the negotiations, Swedenborg witnessed unsuccessful efforts by the Swedish legation to secure French military support for Carolinian Sweden, as the king Charles XII was still in exile in Bessarabia in an increasingly precarious situation.[56]

During his five months in the United Provinces Republic, Swedenborg also went to Leiden and lived with craftsmen to further his mastery of lens-grinding.[57] He had already been living amongst craftsmen for two years in London to learn brass-instrument crafting and furniture-making.[58] Such a move was standard practice for young scholars in their Grand Tour.[59] Nevertheless, Swedenborg had grander goals for his new skills as he aimed to become the best Swedish craftsman of lenses, not only to advance his career, but to do nothing less than free Sweden of its dependence on costly foreign instrument-makers,

[54] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 43.
[55] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 43. See also Tafel, *Documents*, I, p. 668. On Preis, see *SBL*, 'Joachim Preis'.
[56] H. Helander, *Festivus Applausus in Caroli XII. in Pomeraniam Suam Adventum by Emanuel Swedenborg*. ed., intr., trans., comm. by Hans Helander (Uppsala, 1985), pp. 16-8.
[57] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 44.
[58] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 16.
[59] Schaffer, *Lunars*, p. 6.

such as John Marshall in London.[60] With these skills, he further sought to establish the first Swedish observatory in Skara upon his return, and even to build an academy of sciences in Sweden based on the Royal Society.[61] Emanuel's high hopes had likely been stirred up by his excellent relationship with Palmqvist, and he dedicated poems to his new patron. [62] A science enthusiast and politician of considerable influence, Palmqvist had recently been named to the prominent position of High Chancellor, a promising perspective for Swedenborg's prospects. Unfortunately, Palmqvist suffered an untimely death in January 1716, aged 64, and it would take twenty more years and the appearance of a new generation of Swedish scholars before Swedenborg's ideals of scientific institutionalization could materialise.[63]

It is during that period that Swedenborg formed many long-lasting political connections associated with the opposition Hat party, one of the leading forces of Swedish politics during the Age of Liberty (1720-1772), a period of parliamentary dominance in Sweden which coincided with most of Swedenborg's career. Palmqvist and Preis had worked at the Swedish embassy in Paris before being appointed to the Hague for the Congress of Utrecht, and they nevertheless facilitated Swedenborg's contacts at the Swedish embassy in Paris.[64] After steps in Brussels and Valenciennes, Swedenborg moved to the French capital where he stayed for a year, splitting his time between Versailles and Paris from May 1713 until May-June 1714, where he composed a series of allegorical-political poems.[65] In Paris he met the cultural Swedish ambassador and architect Daniel Cronström (1655-1719) along with the secretary of the Swedish embassy Niklas Peter

[60] Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 18-9.
[61] Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 44, 54.
[62] Tafel, *Documents*, I, p. 668. For Emanuel's poem dedicated to Palmqvist during their time in Utrecht, see Helander, *Ludus Heliconius*, pp. 90-7.
[63] V. Roy-Di Piazza, 'Musis Borealibus: science boréale et discours sur le Nord, 1620-1720', *Etudes Germaniques*, 76(1) (2021), p. 76.
[64] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 45.
[65] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p.4. On his poems, see H. Helander, *Camena Borea by Emanuel Swedenborg*. ed., intr., trans., comm. by Hans Helander, p. 12.

Von Gedda (1675-1758), later an important figure of the Hat party. During that period, the French abbot Bignon wrote letters of recommendation for Swedenborg to study mathematics under the supervision of the famous mathematician and professor at the Collège Royal (now Collège de France) Pierre Varignon (1654-1722). It was through these lessons that he hoped to bring decisive contributions to the then-marginal discipline of theoretical mathematics back in Sweden. During his time with Varignon, he produced his most advanced mathematical manuscript, *Geometrica et Algebraica* (1713), the results of which he used to compose the first treatise of algebra, arithmetical simplification and introduction to infinitesimal calculus in Swedish in 1718, titled *Regelkonsten* (*The Rule of the Art*).[66] These manuscripts from 1713 were later redrafted in a more extensive form in Swedenborg's manuscript *Minor Principia* (1729), and served as the geometrical foundations for his metaphysics outlined in *Principia Rerum Naturalium* (1734) which fuelled his major work of the period on soul-body interaction, *De Infinito* (1734).[67]

e) Reading the soul on the face: Leibniz, *Inclinations of the mind* and physiognomy (June 1714- April 1715)

It was during the last months of his Grand Tour that Swedenborg engaged in writings about the soul-body problem, outlining his first research on the topic after missing an opportunity to discuss it with the great Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. At that time, Leibniz had recently released a Latin translation (1712) of his *Théodicée* (1710), which famously discussed divine justice, the problem of evil, and the interaction between soul and body.[68] After his stay in France, Emanuel travelled via Lille towards Hamburg.[69] He then crossed

[66] E. Swedenborg, *Regelkonsten*, ed. illust. Staffan Rodhe (Stockholm, 2013). See also Ryder, I, pp. 203-5 and Stockholm, KVA, Codex 86, 4to, pp. 1-188-; 191-2; 199-404.
[67] Ryder, I, pp. 337-339, 364, 371.
[68] On Leibniz discussing the human soul in the Theodicée, see M. Rozemond, 'Leibniz on the Union of Body and Soul', *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, 79(2), (1997), pp. 153-4.
[69] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 4.

the Holy Roman Empire to the city of Hanover, where he was to meet Leibniz with letters of introduction from Benzelius, who had met and corresponded at length with the famous philosopher.[70] Nevertheless, by Swedenborg's arrival, Leibniz had gone away on a trip to Vienna. This missed opportunity stayed with Swedenborg, for forty-three years after Leibniz's death he claimed to finally have met the philosopher from Leipzig in the spiritual world, who then confessed to him he had 'erred' on the subject of the soul by mistakenly identifying it with human thought.[71]

Swedenborg eventually reached Swedish Pomerania in September 1714, in a context of increasing geopolitical tension. Two months earlier, the library curated by Benzelius in Uppsala had had to be evacuated following fears of an imminent Russian invasion.[72] Sweden had lost the whole territory of Finland to Russia by July 1714, and Stockholm was crowded with refugees and soldiers who had escaped imprisonment and death. Swedenborg would soon write that Sweden was probably living its 'last agony', ready to 'kick one last time' before being subjugated by foreign powers.[73] In a letter to Benzelius, Swedenborg sent his brother-in-law a list of fourteen inventions (several of which had a military character) composed during 1710-1714 and inspired by the 'very ingenious' Wilkins's *Mathematical Magick,* which featured his first venture related to the soul-body problem.[74]

Although the extant list of inventions was succinct and lacked details, Swedenborg had developed most of them in now lost papers, and he claimed he had them 'in hand and ready written out', listed in a separate document to be sent to his father.[75] Some of the inventions showcased his mastery of fluid mechanics, air and water pumps, and would be

[70] Roy-Di Piazza, *Musis Borealibus,* p. 74.
[71] UJ(P), §288.
[72] Acton, *Letters,* I, p. 55.
[73] Acton, *Letters,* I, p. 105.
[74] For Swedenborg's praise of Wilkins, see Acton, *Letters,* I, p.30. For the list of inventions, see Acton, *Letters,* I, pp. 57-8. For reference to 1710-1714, see Ryder, I, p. 127.
[75] Acton, *Letters,* I, p. 57. See also. Ryder, I, p. 127.

featured in his first scientific publications from 1716 to 1718.[76] Among these fourteen inventions, the penultimate represents the first trace of his early interest in non-verbal communication, a topic closely associated with his later research on soul-body interaction. He described it in September 1714 as *Voluntates et affectiones animorum hominum per analysin conjectandi modus* (*A method of conjecturing the wills and affections of men's minds by means of analysis*).[77]

This method is the first reference to Swedenborg's interest in body language and the facial representation of intentions and emotions, and has been known as 'inclinations of the mind' by modern scholars who catalogued his works.[78] This method to read the 'inclinations of the human mind' probably included an attempt to draw prospective proportional measurements of traits and facial expressions. Emanuel's interest in non-verbal communication was informed by popular 'physiognomic' ideas of his time, such as behavioral and moral traits or virtues associated with particular parts or expressions of the face.[79] Amongst modern scholars 'early modern physiognomy' now encompasses a large array of meanings, including, but not limited to Swedenborg's interest in facial reading and non-verbal communication.[80] However, Swedenborg never categorised his research as 'physiognomy' since the term had for him a negative connotation related to divination and fortune-telling.[81] This interest would nevertheless continue to appear until

[76] A. Acton, *The mechanical inventions of Emanuel Swedenborg* (Bryn Athyn, 1939), especially inventions number 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 11.
[77] For an exhaustive list of these inventions, sent to Benzelius, see Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 57-8. *On Inclinations of the mind*, see also Ryder, I, p. 127.
[78] See Ryder I, pp. 127-9.
[79] For a comprehensive study of early modern physiognomy, see M. Porter, *Windows of the Soul: Physiognomony in European culture 1470-1780* (Oxford, 2005).
[80] See also M. Porter, *English Treatises on Physiognomony* (DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 1997); G. Tytler, *Physiognomy in the European Novel: Faces and Fortunes*. (Princeton, 1982) and R. Porter, 'Making Faces: Physiognomy and Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England', *Etudes Anglaises*, 38 (1985).
[81] For Swedenborg's discussion of the term 'physiognomy' and its meaning, see A. Acton, *Rational Psychology*, p. 184, §321 (Bryn Athyn, 2001).

the end of his life, spanning from his anatomical to his religious writings and part of his wider programme of soul-body research.[82]

Despite Swedenborg's late correspondence with figures associated with physiognomy, such as the French abbot Antoine-Joseph Pernety (1716-1796) and the Swiss theologian Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741-1801), he did not directly discuss 'physiognomic' conjectures with them, although their ideas about 'physiognomy' were certainly influenced by Swedenborg's theological writings.[83] Physiognomists such as Lavater and Pernety subscribed to Swedenborg's ideas was partly owing to their common ideological substrate of man as *imago dei*, well exemplified by Swedenborg's later doctrine of the *Homo Maximus*.[84] Swedenborg, on the other hand, was more interested in the way muscles visually translated the 'states of the soul', the physical manifestations of spiritual phenomena enacted by the human body, which touched on the broader topics of universal language and the nature of divine incarnation. As we will see, this first research program on the human soul came to encompass a variety of questions such as thought-transfer, angelic speech, the encoding of meaning into scripture, and the anatomical consequences of the Fall on the human body.

Swedenborg had been away for five years and had stretched the bounds of a Grand Tour far beyond its usual length. His new expertise, great ambitions, scholarly networks and powerful patrons, he hoped, would open for him a bright career of service to the Swedish state. With this goal in mind, he had progressively gathered his inventions for a tentative *specimen academicum* for the University of Uppsala, so he might be considered for a teaching position.[85] As part of the same effort, he also published three poetic works in

[82] For examples of Swedenborg's writings dealing with non-verbal communication related to the face, see A. H. Stroh, *Scientific and philosophical treatises (1716-1740)* (Bryn Athyn, 1992), §2, p. 159; *De Cultu*, §99; AC, §607, and TE, §50-4.
[83] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 641. See also E. Benz, 'Swedenborg and Lavater: the religious foundations of Physiognomy (the art of judging character from facial features)', *The New Philosophy*, 104(1-2), Jan.-June (2001), p. 59.
[84] Benz, *Swedenborg and Lavater*, p. 59.
[85] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 61.

the city of Greifswald in Swedish Pomerania, composed during his travels and dedicated to various patrons.[86] These works of allegorical Latin poetry were meant to demonstrate his literary proficiency, along with his mastery of the epidictic genre at a time where high fluency in neo-Latin remained a requirement for embracing a civil service career in Sweden. By that time, his professional and research horizon remained fairly open, although the major ordeals of Sweden's geopolitical situation were about to shake his plans.

II. 'To live is to tremble': soul-body, mechanics, and the end of the Swedish Empire (1715-1721)

a) Assessor Extraordinarius and soul-body in Daedalus Hyperboreus (1716-1718)

Following his return in 1716, Swedenborg started to collaborate with Swedish inventor and fellow *Collegium Curiosorum* member Christopher Polhem on a programme of research which, by the end of 1718, would give rise to Swedenborg's first publication on the interaction between soul and body. This programme consisted of a series of six publications from 1716 to 1718 in practical science organised as a termly journal, the first of its kind in Sweden. The journal's title, *Daedalus Hyperboreus*, 'Daedalus of the North', echoed Swedenborg's 1715 poem *In libellum nostrum dictum Daedalus Hyperboreus*.[87] Daedalus was the architect of the Knossos labyrinth and crafter of the wings of Icarus in the eighth book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* a work which he admired and often quoted.[88] The title *Daedalus* was also inspired by the second volume of Wilkins's *Mathematical Magick*, which described the 'art of flying' with references to Ovid's character Daedalus.[89] In a Swedish context, the title also asserted the existence of

[86] For critical bilingual editions of these works and the names of those patrons, see Helander, *Festivus Applausus*, Helander, *Camena Borea*, and Helander, *Ludus Heliconius*.
[87] Helander, *Ludus Heliconius*, pp. 96-101, 193 and 227-9.
[88] See e.g. Helander, *Camena Borea*, pp. 34-5, or the introductory quote in E. Swedenborg, *Om Jordenes och Planeterna gång of Stånd* (Skara, 1719), quoting Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, I, fables 3 and 4 (Paris, 1994). See also *Principia* (1734), part. 3, chap. 4, p. 255.
[89] J. Wilkins, *Mathematical Magick*, Vol. 2, (London, 1648), p. 198.

skilled ‘Northern inventors’ of mythical calibre in a nod to Swedenborg’s famous senior collaborator Christopher Polhem.[90]

The journal, mostly edited by Swedenborg yet attributed to Polhem, featured publications from himself and Polhem, along with sporadic contributions from professors Lars Roberg and Johan Wallerius. With one exception, all six issues of the journal were published in Swedish, an unusual choice for the time, justified by the ambition of developing the language as a vehicle-language for mechanic science. Such a move was further motivated by the vernacular turn taken by the main learned European academies, such as the Royal Society in London (1660), L’Académie Royale des Sciences de Paris (1666) and the Königlich-Preußische Akademie der Wissenschaften in Berlin (1700). Polhem and Swedenborg were pushing for Sweden to become a developed techno-scientific nation, in the context of its political and military decline in the last years of the Great Northern War.[91]

Taking advantage of Polhem’s status as a favoured technical adviser to the king during the last years of the war, the pair sought patronage for the journal and their careers from king Charles XII, which they duly obtained. As Polhem opportunistically and cynically remarked, when kings are at war, it is time ‘to diligently milk the cow’ and advance one’s own interests.[92] Charles XII had recently come back (November 1714) to Stralsund, Swedish Pomerania, from a five-year semi-captive exile in the Ottoman Empire, and his return was a major source of celebration in the difficult context for Sweden.[93] The king had a great appetite for mathematical matters, which led him in December 1716 to further reward the pair’s efforts by ennobling Polhem (previously known as Polhammar) and granting Swedenborg a non-stipendiary position of *Assessor Extraordinarius* at the

[90] Roy-Di Piazza, *Musis Borealibus*, p. 77.
[91] Roy-Di Piazza, *Musis Borealibus*.p. 65.
[92] D. Dunér, ‘Swedenborg’s mentor Christopher Polhem’, *New Philosophy*, July-Dec. (2010), p. 1083.
[93] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 60. See Swedenborg’s own *Festivus Applausus* about the return of the king.

Bureau of Mines (the first since 1684!) with a small salary to be endowed from the king's personal funds.

At the time of this unilateral appointment, an assessorship at the Bureau of Mines represented a promising career prospect, considering the importance of mining and metallurgy in the Swedish economy, along with Swedenborg's own family mining estates. These elements, coupled with a speech impediment (probably stuttering) which made Swedenborg anxious about academic teaching, made the *Bergscollegium* career path particularly attractive.[94] The Bureau of Mines had been founded in 1637 and carried on its activities for more than two hundred years, until 1857. It was one of the oldest Swedish technical institutions and it played an important role in Sweden's economy, since a significant part of Swedish export revenues came from the iron and copper trade, extracted from the great copper mine (*Stora Kopparberg*) in Falun, Dalarna.[95] The bureau was composed of a board of assessors, with a vice president and a president.[96] There had been no *Assessor Extraordinarius* since 1684, which meant that the position was unclearly defined by the board's modern statutes. Theoretically, Swedenborg was entitled to a seat and vote on the board.[97] However, the job's non-stipendiary character also meant that he was not bound to attend its meetings, being expected to earn money from other sources of income until, once he had come first in seniority, he would be first considered for a vacant ordinary assessorship.[98]

In practice, Swedenborg's position was unilaterally created by the absolute king in a strained war time economy. The position, unheard of for more than thirty years and unapproved by the bureau, made Swedenborg instantly unpopular within the board and

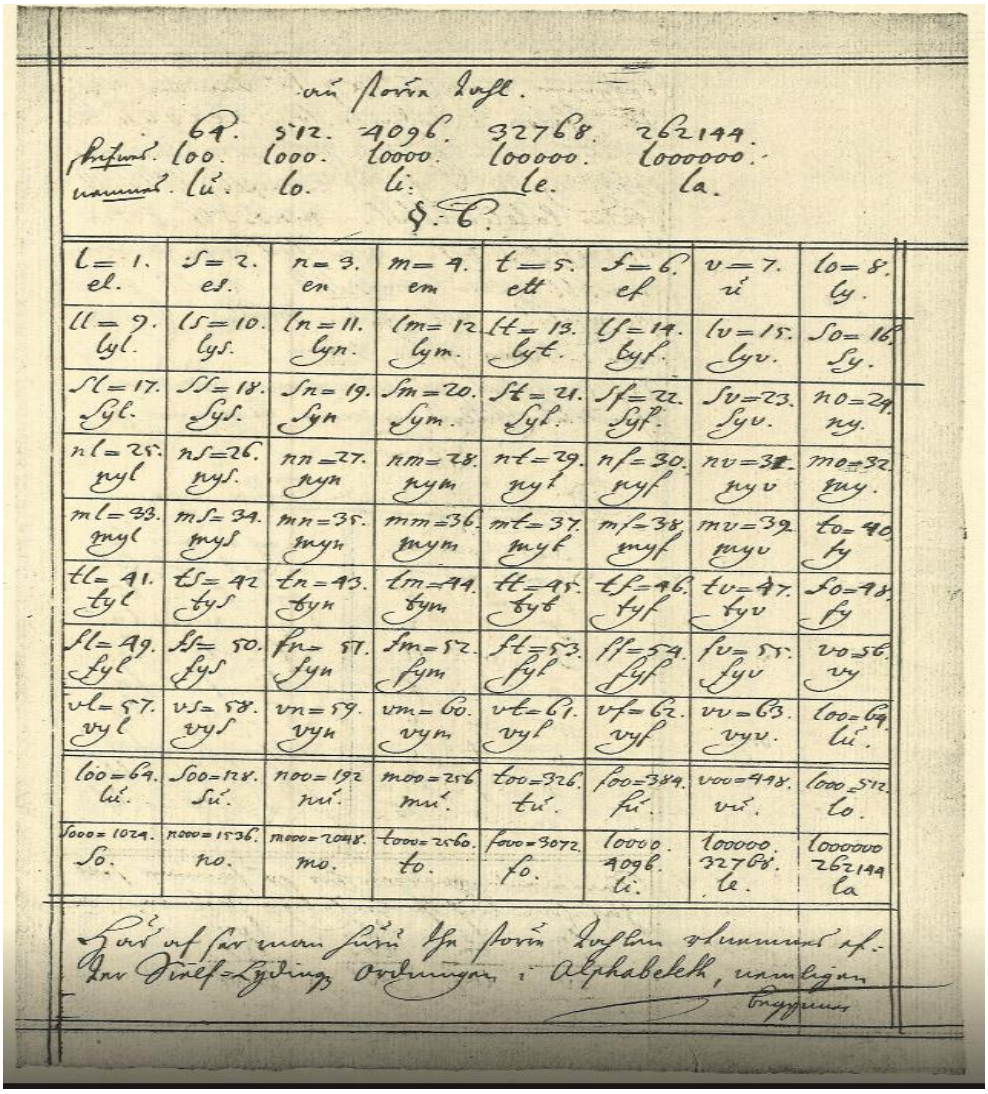
[94] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 127. For reference to Swedenborg's speech impediment, see e.g. Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 334.
[95] See S. Lindroth, *Gruvbrytning och kopparhantering vid Stora Kopparberget intill 1800-talets början*, (Uppsala, 1955) and D. Kirby, *Northern Europe in the Early Modern World: The Baltic World 1492-1772*, (London, 2014).
[96] Fors, *Limits of Matter*, pp. 15-6.
[97] Tafel *Documents*, I, pp. 401-3.
[98] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 128.

for the next ten years.[99] Such precarity was increased by a bitter feud related to Swedish orthography between Swedenborg's father Jesper and Urban Hjärne, the elderly vice-president of the *Bergscollegium*, against whom Swedenborg imprudently sided.[100]

Swedenborg soon realised the precariousness of his position: should the Swedish warrior-king prematurely die, he would not only lose his income but possibly his job. This led him to beg Charles to rewrite his letters of appointment to force the bureau to recognise his nomination, yet these letters proved insufficient to secure full recognition of his role after the king's death during the siege of Fredriksten in November 1718.[101] In Swedenborg's misfortunes, the untimely death of the divisive king (who was probably shot by one of his own soldiers) was perhaps a lesser evil for the ambitious Swede.[102] By the last issue of the journal (which saw him publish his first soul-body research) he had fallen out of favour with Charles over an ambitious project to reform the Swedish numeral system.[103] The king, he claimed, had lost interest in anything but 'mathematical fantasies' and had become obsessed with 'erudite games' (*Ludum Literarium*).[104] In a letter from 8 December 1718, Swedenborg confessed he could even had been facing execution during the Norway campaign, had he not 'used plots to withdraw' himself.[105] As the Swedish Empire was brought to an end with the death of its last absolute Carolinian king, the late monarch's old opportunistic favorites Polhem and Swedenborg soon fell out of favour amongst their colleagues.[106]

[99] Fors, *Limits of Matter*, p. 87.
[100].Fors, *Limits of Matter*, p. 87. See also Tafel, *Documents*, I, p. 663.
[101] Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 127-8.
[102] On Charles XII murder, see Roy-Di Piazza, *Musis Borealibus*, p. 66.
[103] Ryder I, p. 209.
[104] Roy-Di Piazza, *Musis Borealibus*, p. 80.
[105] Swedenborg only hints at this, saying the campaign 'had very nearly caught me'. See Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 202.
[106] Fors, *Limits of Matter*, p. 83.

FIGURE 1 : Swedenborg's octal system sketched in *En Ny Räkekonst*, (1718). The Swedenborg Society.



b) The trembling soul: musical physics and vibratory iatromechanics

The reception of Swedenborg's first soul-body research was largely overshadowed by the king's death and Swedenborg's rocky career start within the bureau. Although the sixth and last issue of *Daedalus Hyperboreus* had been scheduled for the April-May-June term of 1717, due to various delays it was only published in October 1718, viz. six weeks before the death of Charles XII. Amongst its five articles, three had direct military applications in the context of the Great Northern War. The fourth gave Swedenborg's first take on the nature of the human soul and vital essence, which he claimed, consisted

of 'tremulations' of varying intensity.[107] As we will see, this programmatic article from 1718 would be followed by an (uncompleted) wider treatise on the matter in February 1720. Together, they represented the first phase of Swedenborg's soul-body research, focused on the vibratory character of the human soul, in the context of the harmonical-musical physics of the Royal Society and the anatomical research program of Cartesian iatromechanism.

His Daedalus four-page quarto article, titled Bewis at wårt lefwande wesende består merendels i små Darringar thet är tremulationer (Evidence that our living essence merely consists of small vibrations or tremulations) represented his first published work on the nature of the soul and its interaction with the body, there reduced to tremblements or vibratory oscillations within the body's inner membranes. The work was inspired by Polhem's research in sympathetic acoustics conducted at the same time, within the predominantly Cartesian landscape of Sweden at the end of the Great Northern War.[108] Swedenborg saw his work as a pioneering development of ideas previously touched upon by Descartes, and Giovanni Alfonso Borelli, author of De Motu Animalium (1680-1681) and member of the Swedish court in Rome of the late queen Christina of Sweden.[109]

During the Renaissance, the properties of vibrations were explored by scholars such as Robert Fludd and Johannes Kepler, in the wider context of classical literature which described the extraordinary powers of musical sounds.[110] The underlying principles behind the powers of Orpheus but also of Amphion and Zethus, twin sons of Antiope and Zeus, were discussed by scholars such as Giambattista della Porta (1535-1615), Marin Mersenne (1588-1648) and Athanasius Kircher (1602-1680).[111] Mersenne, a friend of

[107] Ryder I, p. 150. For a critical edition of these two treatises, see E. Swedenborg, Om *Darrningar*, intr. com. by David Dunér (Stockholm, 2007), pp. 60-6. For an English edition, see E. Swedenborg, *On Tremulation*, trans. by C. Th. Odhner (Bryn Athyn, 2017), pp. 1-6.
[108] On this landscape, see Roy-Di Piazza, *Musis Borealibus*, pp. 65-6, 73-82.
[109] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 227.
[110] J. Godwin, *L'Esoterisme musical en France 1750-1950* (Paris, 1991) pp. 13-4.
[111] J. Godwin, *Les Harmonies du ciel et de la terre* (Paris, 1994) p. 22.

Descartes, observed that vibrations generated by organ pipes could make stone slabs tremble, in an apparently similar way to the descriptions of the lyre of Amphion which moved the stones of the walls of Thebes.[112] For Mersenne, the principles behind the lyre of Amphion were thought to be the same than a straw moved by a lute's strings, only varying in scale and intensity.

Such works, built upon the long neo-Platonic *Harmonia Mundi* tradition first attributed to Pythagoras, defined by Plato and later systematised by Boethius, were updated in Britain in the works of scholars such as Robert Hooke, who conceptualised the universe as vibratory matter in motion, in dialogue with both Cartesian and Newtonian physics.[113] Hooke's extensive research in musical physics and acoustics (starting in the 1660s) was jointly influenced by earlier works such as Robert Fludd's *Utriusque cosmi…* (1617–19) Francis Bacon's *Sylva Sylvarum* (1627), but also by Newton's views about aether as a cosmic vibrating medium spread across the universe.[114] Hooke's musical metaphysics expanded the research of earlier musical humanists such as Francis Bacon, Kircher or Mersenne, who as we have seen, all speculated about a possible natural vibratory basis behind the extraordinary powers associated with ancient Greek music.[115] From Fludd in the 1610s to John Dryden in the 1680s, celebrated by Swedenborg as 'one of the great English poets worth reading', both the microcosmic body and the macrocosmic musical cosmos were governed by perfect harmonic proportions.[116] This research concurrently occurred in the context of various mathematical attempts to apply logarithms to the division of the diatonic scale, such as the former president of the Royal Society William Brouncker (1620-1684), who was jealous of similar experiments carried by Christian

[112] Godwin, *Harmonies*, pp. 13, 16.
[113] On Pythagoras, Plato and Boethius, see A. Rothman, *Kepler and the pursuit of Harmony* (Chicago, 2017), pp. 8-12. On Hooke see P. Gouk, 'Cosmic vibrations: Echoes of universal harmony at the time of the British Enlightenment' *Terrain*, 68 (2017) §8-9.
[114] Gouk, *Cosmic Vibrations*, §8. On Bacon's *Sylva Sylvarum*, see P. Gouk, 'The role of acoustics and music theory in the scientific work of Robert Hooke', *Annals of Science*, 37(5) (1980), p. 576.
[115] Gouk, *Acoustics*, p. 574. See also Gouk, *Cosmic Vibrations*, §6.
[116] Rothman, *Kepler*, p. 12. On Dryden, see Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 30.

Huygens in the latter's correspondence with Royal Society co-founder Robert Moray.[117] Later on, Newton himself stated in his *Optics* that the spectrum of light could be divided into seven colours proportionally related to the seven intervals of the diatonic scale.[118] Alluding to the 1709 experiments on sound of FRS Francis Hauksbee (1660–1713) we know from Swedenborg's notes on the *Musical dictionary* (London, 1740) of James Grassineau (1715-1769) that the Swede was both interested in the mathematical division of the scale, along with the views of ancient musical Greeks such as Aristoxenes, Aristides and Nichomachus.[119]

Overall, not only did musical physics still occupy an important place in the philosophical systems of major thinkers through the seventeenth and eighteenth century, but a growing focus on acoustic experiments led the emerging mechanistic science of harmonics to be frequently associated with both iatromechanist and vitalist takes on the interaction between soul and body.[120] Modern scholars have noted how musical systems which presented the human soul and body as parts of an integrated micro-macro framework both predated and expanded well into the eighteenth century.[121] For historians such as Penelope Gouk, such an evolution can be traced back from Fludd to Willis, Hooke and then Leibniz, for whom harmony stood at the beginning of the world and constituted the pinnacle of his system of soul-body interaction (*harmonia praestabilita*).[122] In dialogue with this polymorphic tradition, Swedenborg himself would eventually coin his soul-body system in the 1740s 'co-established harmony' (*harmonia constabilita*). As we will see, this represented a tentative response to the Leibnizian-Wolffian model, partly prompted by his (non-extant) correspondence with Wolff.[123] Overall, although

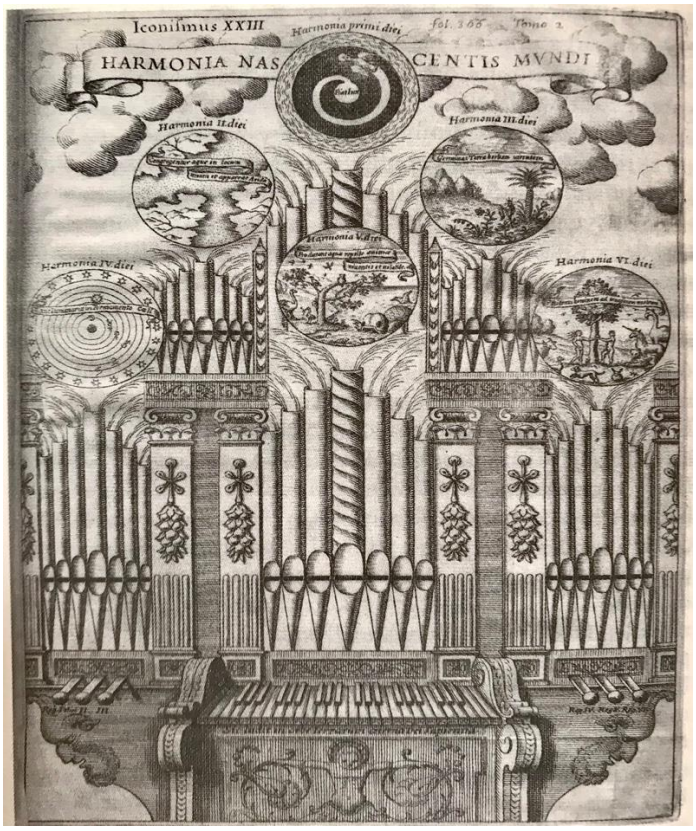
[117] Gouk, *Acoustics*, p. 577.
[118] Godwin, *Esotérisme musical*, pp. 17-8.
[119] *Notebook*, pp. 470-2.
[120] Gouk, *Cosmic Vibrations*, 'abstract'. On vitalist views, see §6.
[121] Gouk, *Cosmic Vibrations*, §6.
[122] On Hooke, vibration and the human soul, see Gouk, *Acoustics*, p. 591. On Willis, see Gouk, *Cosmic Vibrations*, §6.
[123] For reference to this lost correspondence, see Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 767.

Swedenborg's views on the vibratory nature of the soul would change during the 1730s, his interest in harmony never ceased, as demonstrated by the theme's persistence from his 1740s notebook to his later theology dealing with soul-body interaction within the grand body of God.[124]

Finally, Swedenborg's rather typical eighteenth-century interest in harmony was also informed by a precocious passion for profane and sacred music. The son of a famous hymnodist and himself a lifelong opera lover and amateur organist, Swedenborg even had drawn plans during his Grand Tour to design a universal musical instrument of Wilkinsian inspiration.[125] Such plans resonated with Kircher's famous depiction in *Musurgia Universalis* (1650) of the grand organ of God generating all the harmonics of human life, but also more directly with Polhem's own view that the soul of a (Cartesian) automaton could be replaced by a mechanical keyboard operated similarly to a sophisticated musical organ.[126]

[124] In notebook, see 'Musical Harmony', *Notebook*, pp. 469-73. For later references, see e.g. *De Cultu*, §53, ES, §1963, AD, §522, AC, §3986:3, DP, §312:1-2.
[125] Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 57-8. See also Ryder, I, p. 115. Swedenborg's personal organ has been preserved and can still be seen today in his Stockholm's *lusthus* in Skansen, Stockholm.
[126] Dunér, *Natural Philosophy*, p. 186.

FIGURE 2 : Athanasius Kircher's divine organ upon which God plays all the harmonics of life. *Mursugia Universalis* (Rome, 1650). Wellcome Collection Gallery.



As we have seen, Swedenborg viewed his first soul-body work as expanding the works of the Italian school of iatromathematicians such as Borelli, but also of Giorgio Baglivi and Lorenzo Bellini, a movement itself seen as an extension of the iatromechanist program set by Descartes.[127] As noted by Dunér, Swedenborg's library also featured the work of Domenico Guglielmini *De sanguinis natura et constitutione* (1701) which highlighted the benefits of mathematics for the study of human physiology.[128] Another connection lies with the most prominent iatromechanist in Swedenborg's time, Herman Boerhaave (1668-1738), who had taught in Leiden Swedenborg's own preceptor Johan Moraeus.[129] Finally, although Swedenborg did speak of a 'vital force' and was part of a the predominantly Paralcesian institution (the Bureau of Mines), as we will see he remained

[127] Dunér, *Natural Philosophy*, p. 187.
[128] Dunér, *Natural Philosophy*, p. 187.
[129] On Boerhaave, see Dunér *Natural Philosophy*, p. 187.

sceptical of alchemical speculations about the human soul, which at the time were put forward by his father's enemy Urban Hjärne.

c) On trembling, terminology, and thought-sharing at a distance

Swedenborg's 1718 soul-body programme was followed by a more extensive forty-one quarto pages long treatise on February 1720, titled *Anatomi af wår aldrafijnaste natur, wijsande at wart rörliga och lefwande wäsende består uthi Contremiscentier* (*Anatomy of our most subtle nature, showing that our moving and vital force consists of Contremiscences*). In this unfinished sequel, Swedenborg continued to explore the question of soul-body interaction, language, and non-verbal communication. The new work also echoed his facial reading 'inclinations of the mind' research project from his Grand Tour, since 'the sounds and pronunciations of men', he wrote, 'differ just like their faces'.[130]

In his two new vibratory works, Swedenborg created a series of neologisms from Latin terms to account for vibratory intensities associated to various soul-body states. Some of those terms included *tremulationer*, a Swedish noun in indefinite plural form directly derived from the feminine Latin noun *Tremulatio, onis*, 'trembling' or 'quivering'.[131] Swedenborg expanded his vibratory glossary with other terms such as *contremiscentier*, an indefinite plural noun formed on the Latin *contremiscere*: 'to tremble, to be shaken'.[132] In Swedenborg's terminology, *contremiscences* were one of the most subtle forms of tremulation, which he also expressed in the Swedish word *darrningar*, 'tremblements'. The interest for the spiritual powers which arise from the vibration of the mechanical soul were never far away. In later statements from the 1740s (perhaps redolent of the controversial French prophets) Swedenborg would refer in his *Arcana*

[130] Swedenborg, *On Tremulation*, p. 4.
[131] *Lexicon*, p. 473.
[132] *Lexicon*, p. 83

Coelestia to the presence of the divine as being characterised by tremor (a form of trembling which he strictly differentiated from epilepsy), while those who are about to receive divine truths (including himself) he wrote, are trembling.[133] Overall, in 1718-1720, Swedenborg developed a whole typology of 'tremblements' to account for various degrees of vibratory intensity from the soul to the muscles of the body: 'Over an undulation, there may be moving a small undulation such as seen in the water, then over the latter a tremulation, and over then a *contremiscence*, and so eventually an even subtler one which can almost be called a sensation or a *vivum'*.[134]

FIGURE 3 : Later sketch by Swedenborg of the different degrees of vibration of the human soul. Codex 37 (circa 1729). KVA.

[133] AC, §8822, §8917.
[134] *Om Darrningar*, p.72, §2, 288v. My emphasis in bold.

Finally, Swedenborg's work during this period has also been noted for its statements on thought-sharing at a distance, which sought to explain community of thought between separated persons, lovers, friends, or family relatives. Swedenborg claimed that it might be easy (and in fact, rather frequent) to inadvertently enter other people's thoughts by finding oneself accidentally in tune with other cerebral membranes.[135] This followed Christopher Polhem's own interests on the topic in the latter's *Tankar om andarnas varelse* (*Thoughts on the nature of spirits*, undated).[136] In this work, Polhem wrote in the line of Swedish physician Eric Odhelius's dissertation on magnetism (1683) that close friends, relatives or lovers were well known to perceive via sympathy strong emotions such as joy, sorrow or agony while being many miles apart, leading him to speculate on the existence of 'more subtle materials than aether' to carry one's thoughts: namely, a subtle form of thought-essence similar to the essence of ghosts, spectres, faeries and trolls.[137] Swedenborg summarised the nature of this vital essence in Cartesian terms, claiming it was a 'continually moving, tremulatory, living force' present within all humans.[138]

These speculations about thought-transmission more broadly operated within the context of traditional theories of Baconian action at a distance. Closer to Swedenborg's publications, Lebniz's *Monadologie* (1720) further offered an alternative model of communication between the elementary monads. Swedenborg believed in thought-sharing and communication at a distance all his life, and we can note that the first famous public display of his spiritual powers consisted of a perception at a distance of the Great Stockholm Fire of 1759.[139] Although Swedenborg acknowledged the widely controversial nature of such 'sympathies' among the learned, he repeatedly claimed, like Polhem

[135] Swedenborg, *On Tremulation*, p. 5.
[136] Polhem's *Efterlämnade Skrifter*, III, p. 314 in Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 440.
[137] Dunér, *Om Darrningar*, p. 19.
[138] Swedenborg, *On Tremulation*, p. 6.
[139] Sigstedt, *Epic*, pp. 269-70.

before him, that their reality was 'confirmed by experience'.[140] Building up on this belief, Swedenborg would later develop a remarkable theory of sympathetic consociation in the afterlife, which he claimed, explained how human souls could come in the presence of each other in an environment yet structurally devoid of space and time.[141]

This more broadly points to the central status of 'sympathies' as a topic of enduring scientific interest during the long seventeenth century, which then gradually moved into the moral and artistic spheres during the eighteenth century.[142] Indeed, despite growing scholarly scepticism, discussions of thought-transference between supernatural entities, far away lovers or harmonic sympathies remained pleasant tropes in learned circles. For instance, in Cartesian France, the famous composer Jean Philippe Rameau (1683-1764) nicknamed Euclide-Orphée for his mathematical approach to music and acoustics, showcased distant thought-communication as an essential plot element of his popular opera *Platée* in 1751, premiered at Versailles for the birth of Louis XV's eldest son. Nevertheless, as honourable and pleasant those ideas might have been at the French court of Versailles, in 1720s Sweden, Swedenborg's ideas were met with fierce resistance.

d) Death of Charles XII (1718) and ennoblement of the Swedberg family (1719)

The difficult first years of Swedenborg's career in the Bureau of Mines did not only stem from the death of his divisive protector Charles XII. Indeed, the king's death ushered a much wider political revolution which marked the end of the Swedish Empire and redrew the balance of political power in the country, and with it, the priorities of the Swedish state in regards to its technoscientific development.[143] After the death of the childless king in November 1718, a succession dispute opposed supporters of the king's sister

[140] Swedenborg, *Psychologia Rationalis*, §518, p. 285.
[141] For a summary of this, see Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, pp. 8-11.
[142] S. Lobis, *Virtue of Sympathy: Magic, Philosophy, and Literature in Seventeenth-Century England* (New Haven, 2014) p. 1.
[143] Roy-Di Piazza, *Musis Borealibus*, pp. 80-1.

Ulrika Eleonora (1688-1741) versus the 'Holstein party' which favoured the late king's nephew, the pro-Russian prince Charles Frederik of Holstein-Gottorp (1700-1739). These divisions laid grounds for a fifty-year political struggle in the *Riskdag* (Swedish parliament) between two rival parties. The first was the *Mössor* party (Caps or night-gowns) led by count Arvid Horn (1664-1742) who maintained policies of neutrality and economic reconstruction following the end of the Great Northern War, and secured the treatise of Nystad in 1721 which formally ceded the Swedish Baltic provinces to Russia in exchange for peace. At the end of this so-called Horn Period (1720-1739), the *Hattar* (Hats), pro-France, pro-Holstein and in favour of revenge against Russia, eventually took over under the leadership of Swedenborg's former London protector, the diplomat Carl Gyllenborg. The two political parties fought over the control of Swedish politics during the whole Age of Liberty.

Those changes took place while Swedenborg was unsuccessfully trying to pitch his new vibratory soul- body research to various Swedish learned institutions. In the meantime, Charles's sister Ulrika Eleonora (1688-1741) was chosen to succeed her late brother, invoking 'proximity of blood' and made important concessions to anti-absolutist supporters. Ulrika Eleonora reigned for a year and a half before abdicating in favour of her husband, the unpopular Landgrave of Hesse Kassel Frederick I (reigned 1720-1751) who had married her in order to access the throne, and would never succeed in challenging the regained authority of the *Riksdag*. Although Ulrika Eleonora's reign only lasted eighteen months, her policies completely reshaped Swedish aristocracy as she ennobled more than two hundred families (!) during the period, and approved the 1719 constitution which ended Swedish absolutism until 1772.

During this period, Swedenborg's father Jesper Swedberg made direct constitutional recommendations to the queen in 1719 ('On the right cause of Sweden's woes, and a powerful penalty against it') and 1720 for a 'divinely ordered government' under the new

constitution.[144] Although it is unclear whether any of his recommendations were followed, Jesper Swedberg was nevertheless chosen by the queen as part of the new cohort to receive ennoblement, in reward for his fidelity and services to the Swedish crown. Jesper Swedberg was the bishop of Skara, and as such, a member of the House of Clergy (*Prästeståndet*), one of the four chambers of the *Riksdag*, along with the House of Peasants (*Bondeståndet*), the House of Burghers (*Borgarståndet*) and the House of Nobles (*Adelsståndet*). According to the custom, only Jesper's descendants were ennobled, a tradition designed to avoid bishops getting double-voting right in the *Riksdag*. This led Jesper Swedberg's eldest surviving son Emanuel, at the time thirty-one years old, to become Emanuel Swedenborg, with a coat of arms featuring a mining mountain on the right, entwined keys on the left, with on top a clerical mitre surrounded by two northern stars, overhung by two laurels and a lion holding a key. The crest referred to the double background of the Swedberg family in theology and mining exploitation, serving the regal Lion of the North, a typical heraldic motive and a common monarchic symbol in Sweden.[145]

[144] Linköping, Linköpingstatsarkiv, Stiftsbiblioteket, Handskritskatalog, T 212 A: Jesper Swedberg, *Erttq orsqken til Sweriges elende, och kraftig bot there mot… 1719*, with a letter to Ulrika Eleonora. See also *En gudelig regeringsform, för en Christelig öfwerhet upsatt af then Helga Anda igenom konung David; och nu ehra af Guds förklarad… år 1720*.
[145] H. Helander, *Neo-Latin Literature in Sweden in the Period 1620-1720* (Uppsala, 2004), pp. 395-7.

FIGURE 4 : Coat of arms of the Swedenborg family, featuring an episcopal mitre, a mining mountain, keys, and the royal 'Lion of the North'. KVA.

Emanuel Swedenborg was now a nobleman with the lifelong right to sit in the House of Nobles, the dominant chamber of the ruling Swedish quadricameral parliament during the Age of Liberty. Although a discrepancy in prestige would long persist between the 1719 cohort and older aristocratic families, the ennoblement nevertheless improved Swedenborg's situation: his social status was now in line with the other members of the *Bergscollegium* who, by the year 1723, were all members of the House of Nobles.[146] Although Swedenborg's legitimacy as an assessor was still challenged by the Board members of the bureau, his nobility ensured he would not be discriminated upon in terms of status for a hypothetical future regularization. Still, acceptance from *Bergscollegium* members remained far in sight.

Thanks to his father and his own closeness to the late Charles XII, Swedenborg had maintained a good relationship with queen Ulrika Eleonora, and he tentatively relied upon her to force the *Bergscollegium* to grant support for his mining projects during the

[146] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 299.

early 1720s. Unfortunately, the queen's short tenure meant her support did not yield any tangible improvements for Swedenborg.[147] The premature ending of Ulrika Eleonora's reign meant that Swedenborg lost his second royal support in less than two years. And more struggles were to follow.

III. Struggles in the Bureau of Mines

a) Mining and leave of absence across the Holy Roman Empire

In December 1719, a freshly-ennobled, yet already disillusioned Swedenborg bitterly lamented on the lack of support for (and interest in) practical science in his home country. At thirty-one years old, he was without a salary, out of favour and persona non grata at the Bureau of Mines. Swedenborg considered stopping publishing completely and to translate his Swedish works into Latin or French (which he partially did in 1721) and republish them in England or Holland, where the interest, he hoped, would certainly be greater.[148] After Charles XII's death, his more *established* collaborator Polhem refocused on his Stjernsund workshop and his *Laboratorium* Mechanicum, the latter structure he had founded in 1697 to teach technical, practical and mechanical science. By March 1720, Swedenborg and Polhem unsuccessfully continued to advocate, with growing discouragement, for the foundation of a Swedish *Societas Mathematica*.[149] Their project was deemed as unnecessary by the Horn government, primarily preoccupied with economic reconstruction.

His soul-body programme was to meet a similar fate. From February to March 1720, Swedenborg started to send an updated version of his work on tremulation to a newly-founded learned Society in Uppsala, the *Bokwettsgille* ('Literary guild'), established on 26 November 1719 by Benzelius, the medicine professor and philologist Olof Rudbeck

[147] Tafel, *Documents*, I, pp. 405-6.
[148] Ryder, I, p. 232. For Swedenborg's republished works in Latin, see Ryder I, pp. 216-37.
[149] Roy-Di Piazza, *Musis Borealibus*, p. 81.

the Younger, and medicine professor Lars Roberg, the only three surviving members of the short-lived *Collegium Curiosorum*.[150] From February 1720 until 1739, the *Bokwettsgille* supervised the publication of the quarterly *Acta Literaria Sueciae*, which succeeded Swedenborg's *Daedalus Hyperboreus* as the first regularly published journal devoted to Swedish science.[151]

Swedenborg's tremulation work was sent in separate chapters for review between February-March 1720 to the *Bokwettsgille* and was reviewed by assessor Bromell, an experienced anatomist who had defended his thesis under Bidloo and studied under Ruysch and Boerhaave.[152] After sending his first chapter, Swedenborg's work received mixed reactions from members of the Literary Guild on 12 February 1720.[153] This prompted him to directly fast-forward send his conclusive thirteenth chapter to Benzelius in an attempt to clarify criticisms.[154] Unfortunately, reception remained negative, and after a couple of last mentions of the work in May 1720, Swedenborg eventually withdrew his treatise from consideration to the Literary Guild. The rejection of his research was accompanied by another unsuccessful petition (his third attempt) to be granted a salary from the college in June 1720.[155] His situation continued to worsen, as by the summer of 1720 Swedenborg had been formally stripped of his seating and voting rights at the meetings of the Board of Mines.[156] He was also barred from signing college documents and denied promotion as a full assessor, despite a vacancy left by the senior assessor Strömner.[157] These actions against him were led by the assessor David Leijel (1660-1727) and the college vice-president Urban Hjärne (1641-1724), who both despised Swedenborg for having obtained his position through what they considered

[150] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 225.
[151] Acton *Letters*, I, pp. 226-7 and Ellegren, *Hvad Nytt*, p. 109.
[152] Dunér, *Natural Philosophy*, p. 188.
[153] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 227.
[154] Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 228-9.
[155] Tafel, *Documents*, I, pp. 406-7
[156] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 242.
[157] Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 242, 297.

'royal favouritism'.[158] With the Literary Guild not interested and the Bureau of Mines still punishing him, Swedenborg submitted a reworked manuscript of his tremulation research to the Swedish *Collegium Medicum*, the College of Health in Stockholm in November 1720.[159] The *Collegium Medicum* had been founded in 1663 as *Collegium Medicorum* and transformed in in 1688 by Charles XI, as an institution meant to regulate practices and qualifications of medical professions in Sweden.[160] Yet here as well, reception of the work proved disappointing. Although the treatise was recorded in the minutes of the Board of Health, no comments nor copy of the manuscript has survived, indicating that the work had been rejected.[161] The remaining copies of *Anatomi af wår aldrafijnaste natur* sent to Benzelius, which consisted of chapters I-VI and XIII, were later moved to the Diocesan archives of Linköping, where Benzelius was appointed Bishop in 1731. They still remain here to this day.

As we will, those refusals prompted Swedenborg to shift the focus of his work on mining for the next couple of years. However, his interest for the Cartesian soul and its vibratory nature persisted, and would nourish the next phase of his soul-body research in the years to come. After the rejection of his tremulation model, Swedenborg suspended his project on soul-body interaction until the beginning of the 1730s. Although various manuscripts provide evidence for his continued interest throughout the 1720s, his research on the topic became marginal and was carried on the side.[162] In his *Miscellanea Observata* (1722), Swedenborg published *De undulatione et tremulatione particularum bullarium, hypothetice*, in which he developed his bullular model by positing a tremulations theory where the different elements all have different particles of different sizes which vibrate

[158] Tafel, *Documents*, I, p. 663.
[159] Odhner wrote that Swedenborg sent *Anatomi af war aldrafinaste natur* to the *Sundhets Collegium*, the Swedish Board of Health in Stockholm. Swedenborg, *On Tremulation*, ix.
[160] C. J. Lénström, *Sveriges Litteratur- och Konst-Historia* (Uppsala, 1841) p. 33.
[161] Ryder, I, p. 225.
[162] Codex 37 and 86.

with each other. Differences were made between undulation (which moves matter) and vibration, which doesn't. This section accounts for both the persistence and evolution of the tremulation model. Although it does not touch directly on the nature of the soul, it makes for an important part of Swedenborg's theory of elements and matter, which became the basis of the future research on soul-body interaction. For instance, in his non-transcribed *Commonplace book* written from 1719 to 1733, he summarised various metaphysical *opiniones philosophorum* of Descartes and Leibniz, along with anatomical notes on the brain and the nerves, extracted from Willis, while in other manuscripts, he continued to depicts the different vibratory forms of the human soul.

Disillusioned, Swedenborg resorted to focus on mining and metallurgy to sustain himself, seek recognition and income abroad via the support of wealthy German patrons, such as Louis Rudolph, the Duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg (1671-1735). He went on leave across the United Provinces via Copenhagen, and then across the Holy Roman Empire to visit various mining exploitations from 1721 to 1722, and published widely on metallurgy, mining and geology.[163] Re-motivated on his return by his new expertise and patrons, Swedenborg provocatively bypassed the refusal of the college to grant him a salary by directly offering king Frederick I a deal to increase the content productivity of copper extraction from ores by ten per cent, while using less coal for smelting thanks to a new method inspired by German chemist and former Charles XI metallurgist Johan von Löwenstern-Kunckel (1630-1703).[164] The whole affair led to bitter disputes between the Bureau of Mines and mining authorities in Falun, which eventually scrapped down the project.[165] But Swedenborg's strategy had worked: although the Horn government would

[163] For the list of cities visited by Swedenborg during this journey, see Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 4-5.
[164] Tafel, *Documents*, I, pp. 408-9, 415 and Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 268-9.
[165] Tafel, *Documents*, I, p. 415, 419, 420. For the list of names who signed the reply to Swedenborg's proposal, see 420. For scrapped, see p. 425.

not overrule the Bureau of Mines leadership, the court now saw him as an ambitious and disruptive mining expert with bold ideas.

During this period, Swedenborg strategically involved himself further in the economic matters of the Swedish State, and his Commonplace book of the period includes outlines for philosophical works on natural law and the causes of war, showcasing his interest in economic and strategic warfare.[166] During the *Riksdag* of 1723, all members of the *Bergscollegium* were mobilised in the House of Nobles, and Swedenborg used the opportunity to acquire further political influence by producing four memorials related to the economy of the Swedish State and seating as a member on the influent parliamentary commission on foreign trade.[167] The export of iron alone brought in four-fifths of the total income from Swedish exports in 1724, which illustrate how dependent the Swedish state was for the expertise of mining assessors like Swedenborg.[168] This ushered into new professional opportunities: in a letter to Eric Benzelius on 26 May 1724, Swedenborg reflected on a professorial position in mathematics at the university of Uppsala for which he was shortlisted. Like before, he repeated his hope to not be chosen for it, as it was clear his speech impediment would not go away.[169] His stuttering was attested by several of his acquaintances and continued to affect him in his old age, discouraging him to take positions involving extensive amounts of public speaking.[170] However, his impediment also contributed to his public persona, as it prompted him to talk slowly, to ponder his words, and later on, to regularly point to his writings instead of engaging in lengthy arguments.[171] This background might also have contributed (albeit

[166] Codex 86, pp. 315, 324, 335. See also Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 299-301.
[167] Ryder, I, pp. 313, 315, 317 and 320.
[168] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 318.
[169] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 334.
[170] See Bergquist, *Secret*, pp. 88-9 and Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 334.
[171] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 89.

more marginally) to his interest about universal language, thought-based communication and the possibility of non-verbal or internal speech.

b) 'Darkest enigmas': Swedenborg and the pursuit of true alchemy

During this period, the question of Swedenborg's shift towards mining and metallurgy after the failure of his first soul-body programme raises the question of its possible continuation through the discipline of alchemy. Modern scholarship on Swedenborg has been divided on the topic, from Marsha Keith Schuchard depicting the Swede as an active alchemist to Lars Bergquist who presented him as completely dismissive of alchemical goals. The picture presented by this research argues that Swedenborg developed a relatively exhaustive knowledge of chemical and alchemical literature, largely informed by his readings abroad and the interests of his superiors at the Board of Mines. Nevertheless, despite being informed on the topic, a close study of his library and publications on alchemical matters nevertheless demonstrates an empirical, critical stance towards alchemy, especially of its debated spiritual and transmutational aspects.

In 1683-1684, Charles XI had personally funded the creation of the *Laboratorium Chemicum*, a laboratory within the *Bergscollegium* dedicated to the pursuit of chemical and alchemical research. The *Laboratorium* provided an integrated structure within Sweden's steering body over mining and metal extraction, which hosted the experiments of famous alchemists such as queen Christina's Italian court alchemist Giuseppe Borri (1627-1695), who had previously served at the court of Danish king Frederic III. Through the *Laboratorium*, the *Bergscollegium* long hosted an enthusiastic small-scale hub of Swedish alchemical research, exemplified by the works of Urban Hjärne, a former physician, chemist and vice-president of the bureau (1713-1720) who also directed the *Laboratorium Chemicum*. A vocal opponent of the Swedish witchcraft trials from 1668 to 1676, Hjärne had published in 1712 an ambitious and well-received treatise of 'Nordic

alchemy' *Actorum Chymicorum tentaminae*.[172] His successor, count Gustav Bonde (1684-1764), later a long-time ally and follower of Swedenborg, was also well-known for his alchemical interests and presided the *Bergscollegium* from 1721 to 1727.

Despite the varied alchemical interests of his superiors, Swedenborg associated, in line with many continental critics of the discipline, the main pursuit of alchemy with chrysopoeia viz. the practical transmutation of metals into gold. His *Miscellanea Observata*, (Leipzig, 1722) featured an article titled *Rationes quaedam de impossibilitate transmutandi metalla et praecipue in aurum* (*Reasons for the impossibility of transmuting metals, especially into gold*) in which he strongly denied such possibility. Transmutation of metals into gold, he wrote, was 'a kind of philosopher's stone' found only 'in the imagination' of a 'flood of alchemistic writers' who 'lost their time and pains' while deluding others through the 'darkest enigmas' until 'like their masters, they had wasted their substance'.[173] Swedenborg's critical stance aligned with the famous French empiricist Nicolas Lémery's *Cours de Chymie* (1675) a classic chemical treatise critical of alchemy which he had bought in its 1683 edition during his Grand Tour in Paris.[174] Like Lémery, Swedenborg regarded cases of alleged successful transmutation into gold as deceit of the senses, and subjected any prospective serious assessment of the problem to corroborative experiment and empirical reasoning:

> As the extreme grossness of our vision prevents us from seeing more than the merest surface of gold, so we ought rather to determine the possibility or impossibility of transmutation by reason and experiment, than by ocular demonstration. [175]

This critical side against alchemy highlights a point of long-lasting scholarly contention: despite enduring narratives which presented him as a mere lifelong theorist, Swedenborg

[172] *SBL*, 'Urban Hjärne'.
[173] *Miscellanea*, II, art. 13, p. 75.
[174] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 476
[175] *Miscellanea*, p. 75.

practiced many experiences as a metallurgist to defend his views on salts, fire, colours and metals, most of which were based on his copy of David Kellner's *Collectanea chymico-metallurgica curiosa* (Leipzig, 1715).[176] Swedenborg further argued against chrysopoeia because of the peculiar nature of gold, which he described as the metal with the highest mass yet with the widest pores.[177] This view also followed Lémery's corpuscular doctrine of 'pointes and pores'. Such views formed the backbone of his criticism against chrysopoeia; '[metallurgical] art can achieve everything with metals' he wrote, 'except to change the form and weight of their particles' thus discarding the possibility of transmutation.[178]

Nevertheless, despite his critical stance against alchemy, Swedenborg wished to appear as a reformer rather than a mere detractor of the discipline. Perfecting the art of metal separation, he argued, was a much more efficient path to refine and pursue. In his *Miscellanea Observata*, Swedenborg even insisted that the art of 'noble and true alchemy' was actually the 'art of separating metals':

> But it appears worthy of our pains to cultivate the art of separating metals with great exactness; of separating silver from copper, and gold from both, and other noble metals from dross, dirt, sand and stones. And as it is certain that gold often lies in the bosom of copper, silver, clay, bole and river sand, so art is required to separate it, which art is really noble and the true alchemy.[179]

This led him to review various techniques of metal separation in his subsequent metallurgic works *De Ferro* and *De Cupro* (1734). As a result of this position, Swedenborg never shared the anatomical-alchemical views of his superior Urban Hjärne, which probably did not arrange the latter's obstruction to his acceptance and advancement in the *Bergscollegium*. Similarly, Swedenborg remained sceptical of

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[176] J. Wilson, 'Swedenborg, Paracelsus, and the dilute traces: a lyrical and critical reflection on mysticism, reform, and the nature of influence' *The New Philosophy*, 114(3-4), July-Dec. (2011), p. 200.
On his original experiments being noted, see E. Chambers, *A supplement to Mr. Chambers's Cyclopædia: or, universal dictionary of arts and sciences*, (2 vols) I (London, 1753), p. 248, 'Furnace'.
[177] *Miscellanea*, p. 77.
[178] *Miscellanea*, p. 77.
[179] *Miscellanea*, p. 78.

Behmenist beliefs in personal spiritual regeneration through the purification of metals, and as we will later, he would later strongly deny any influence of Boehme on his writings.[180]

Despite this stance, we can also note that Swedenborg exhibited an interested in Paracelsian iatrochemistry, and his metallurgic research also exhibits an interest in pharmacopeia remedies based on plants and salts.[181] Moreover, Swedenborg's works on soul-body interaction from the late 1730s also sought to appeal to subscribers of alchemy, through the occasional use of Paracelsian terminology as terminological equivalents to the principles and forces he was trying to describe.[182]

c) Gyllenborg's protégé: regularisation at the *Bergscollegium* and radical Dippelianism (1724-1730)

Faced with a career deadlock, Swedenborg's efforts to develop his mining profile, growing economic and political influence were about to pay off. His first break took place following the death of Urban Hjärne in March 1724, and the appointment of assessor Bromell as royal physician, which led him to finally be promoted to a half-salaried, ordinary assessorship in July 1724. Swedenborg had faced a first refusal from the king's office on the matter a month earlier, yet the decision was overturned, following successful lobbying from Carl Gyllenborg.[183] At the time, the Hat leader was enjoying a rise of influence as leader of the opposition Holstein faction, in contrast to a difficult stint for Prime Minister Arvid Horn, while the Hessian Swedish king Frederick I had recently been stripped of most of his personal authority after a failed attempt to restore royal absolutism in 1723. In November 1724, the Swedish pretender to the throne Duke

[180] On Boehme's spiritual alchemy, see M. A. Zuber, *Spiritual Alchemy, from Jacob Boehme to Mary Anne Artwood* (Oxford, 2021) p. 11.
[181] E. Swedenborg, *Regnum Subterraneum sive Minerale: de Cupro* (Leipzig, 1734), p. 517. See also Codex 37, p. 22. See also *De Fibra*, p. 217.
[182] *OERA*, I, §253.
[183] Tafel, *Documents*, I, pp. 431-4.

Charles of Holstein (1700-1739) married Anna Petrovna, the Czar's daughter, a marriage which aroused hopes of restoring the Swedish Empire through a personal union with Russia that would serve to recover the lost Baltic provinces. Swedenborg's ties to Carl Gyllenborg grew deeper during the period, and after his promotion he rented a room close to the *Bergscollegium* in central Stockholm owned by the wealthy count. Swedenborg's sister Hedvig also had Gyllenborg as landlord, and rented an apartment at the same place with her husband Lars Benzelstierna, an assessor at the Bureau of Mines since 1722 with whom Swedenborg had a difficult relationship.[184]

From 1725 to 1732 (37 to 45 years old), Swedenborg stayed in Sweden and published nothing, which makes it his longest and least productive period of his life in terms of publications. Unreleased works included his opinion on the 'Newcomen steam engine' used in England (1725) which relied on steam to mechanically pump water in mines, and his *Sit felix faustumque! Principia Rerum Naturalium ab Experimentis et Geometria sive ex posteriori et priori educta* (a manuscript known as the *Minor Principia*, 1729), which built on the results of his mathematical and geometrical studies from 1713 and reveal his first theory of elements and of the principles underlying nature.[185] Although he did not publish anything during those seven years, we know from his manuscripts that his interest in soul-body continued. His 1729 manuscript featured key geometrical ideas relating to his next published work on the interaction of soul and body, *De Infinito* (1734) about how the infinite and the finite motion of first natural points generate the line, the surface and the solid. A whole section of the book was devoted to particles ordered in a nonal scale, showing how his later doctrines of discrete degrees to bridge Cartesian dualism first emerged from his geometrical research.

[184] O. Hjern, 'Swedenborg in Stockholm', *Swedenborg Zentrum Berlin* (2019) pp. 6-7.
[185] Ryder, I, pp. 336-7.

During this relatively little-known period of his life, we know that Swedenborg was seduced by some radically heterodox and Pietist ideas, which complemented his father's well-known Pietist beliefs and fascination for the supernatural. While working on his *Minor Principia*, Swedenborg regularly attended sermons from the itinerant German radical Pietist theologian, alchemist and physician Johann Conrad Dippel (1673-1734), who resided in Stockholm from 1726 to 1728. A charismatically gifted intellectual and persuasive orator, Dippel had many followers among the Swedish nobility before he got banned from the country for theological dissent in 1728.[186] Although Swedenborg later became critical of Dippel's radical emphasis on faith over any form of dogma and his loose relationship to Scripture, he still conceded twenty years later that his mind had been confused and 'poisoned' by Dippel's preaching, and that he had been himself 'among those who adhered to him'.[187] Although Dippel's emotional calls to personal piety, his rejection of organised priesthood and formal church initially strengthened Swedenborg's Pietist leanings, it does not seem that the latter borrowed from Dippel on soul-body, although both men shared a noted interest in the topic.[188] In his dissertation *Vitae animalis morbus et medicina suae vindicata origini* (*Maladies and Remedies of the Life of the Flesh*, Leiden, 1711), Dippel had claimed he had found the long-sought alchemical elixir of life, a procedure to expel evil spirits and demons from the human body, and speculated on various mechanical means to achieve soul-transference.[189]

Swedenborg later alluded to personal exchanges with Dippel where they disagreed on the human soul and spiritual corporeity after death. Dippel, he claimed, mistakenly believed that 'fire is spirit', had concluded from his studies on wild animals that major part of the human soul perished with the body, while life after death merely consisted of a ghost-

[186] Bergquist, *Secret*, pp. 199-201.
[187] See ES, §3486.
[188] On Swedenborg and Dippel, see Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 200.
[189] K. Carr, 'Saints and Sinners: Johann Konrad Dippel' *The Royal College of Surgeons of England Bulletin*, 2013, pp. 22-3.

like, disembodied form of existence akin to a 'spectre'.[190] Despite his criticisms of Dippel as a cultish, deceptively seductive opportunist who abhorred contradiction, defamed others and held erroneous religious views, Swedenborg would share with the controversial theologian from Burg Frankenstein, Hesse, an ambiguous place within the contemporary Enlightenment spectrum, well-summarised by Karl Rudolf Hagenback's statement that 'one doubts whether to place [Dippel] in the class of Pietists or of rationalists, of enthusiasts or of scoffers, of mystics or of freethinkers'.[191] At the end of his life in the 1770s, a similar ambiguity certainly shrouded Swedenborg.

Despite his growing fascination for the heterodox pietism of Dippel, Swedenborg's professional ascension continued without major obstacles and he eventually obtained a full salary in the Bureau of Mines in 1730 at the rather late age of 42.[192] The following year, his brother-in-law Eric Benzelius was appointed to the prestigious position of bishop of Linköping, which marked a point of great influence for Swedenborg's extended family. Now fully set with a full-time, secured position, Swedenborg attended meetings at the Board of Mines regularly from 1730 to 1732, and resorted to cement his legacy as a mining expert, natural philosopher and matter theorist, before planning to revert to his soul-body research.

d) Apologetics, Christian Wolff and first theological manuscript (1733)

In 1733, Swedenborg took a leave of absence of nine months across the Holy Roman Empire (Berlin, Dresden, Carlsbad, Leipzig, Cassel, Halle) to publish an ambitious new work in three volumes, titled *Opera Philosophica et Mineralia* in Leipzig. The first two volumes would compile his works on mining, geology (fossils) and metallurgy (iron and copper), before culminating with a central volume titled *Principia Rerum Naturalium*

[190] On spirit is fire, see ES, §5962. On disembodiment, see ES, §3890, AC, §443.
[191] Carr, *Dippel*, p. 22.
[192] Tafel, *Documents*, I, p. 439.

(1734), in which he outlined his theory of elements along with his vorticial theory aiming to 'correct' Cartesian physics.[193] Swedenborg's nebular theory has also been noted for featuring various aspects which anticipated Kant and Pierre Simon de Laplace's models by two decades.[194] In his *Principia*, Swedenborg also outlined his theory of magnetism at the poles, with the ethereal- magnetic element acting as the source of the Earth's vortex, which allowed the souls of animals to instinctively orient themselves.[195] The *Principia* also expanded Swedenborg's early work on the revolution of Earths from 1719, which sought to demonstrate that the Earth had once known eternal spring, due to a faster revolution speed and shorter length of the year.[196] It also marked Swedenborg's first affirmative statements on the plurality of worlds, a topic he would later expand in his theology.[197]

Swedenborg left to pursue this work on 10 May 1733, departing with his sister Hedvig, her husband Lars Benzelstierna, their landlord and friend Carl Gyllenborg and other diplomats.[198] In October 1733, the five-months long process of publishing his *Principia* begun in Leipzig with publisher Frederic Hekel in October 1733, and the printing was completed in April 1734.[199] The costs of the three richly illustrated folio volumes of *Principia* were considerable and amounted to 45,000 riksdaler.[200] They represented Swedenborg's most expensive publication, and his legacy as a natural philosopher concerned with cosmology, physics and metallurgy.

As we will see, during this leave he displayed intense writing activity with various drafts providing evidence that his *Principia* anticipated an active return to his vibratory soul-

[193] Dunér, *Natural Philosophy*, p. 467. For Swedenborg's theory of elements, see *Principia*, I, chap. 6, 9, and part. III, chap. 5, 7.
[194] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 5.
[195] Dunér, *Natural Philosophy*, p. 381.
[196] *Principia*, vol. II, part. III, chap. 12.
[197] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 5.
[198] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 7.
[199] Ryder, I, p. 371
[200] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 355.

body research programme. Swedenborg developed these ideas and notes as appendices to the *Principia*, which provides evidence that Swedenborg saw a clear connection between his milestone work of physics and metals and his upcoming research on soul-body interaction.[201]

Swedenborg first developed manuscript on the topic of soul-body interaction since 1720 was titled *De Mechanismo Animae et Corporis* (1733). In this fifteen-pages long manuscript, he bridged the topics of vibrations with hypotheses on the location, nature and substance of the soul in the body, showing remarkable continuity with his tremulation works from fifteen years earlier. Swedenborg used similar analogies to instrument strings and membranes, while tremulations were again presented as the solution to the Cartesian *contiguum*.[202] In this still iatromechanical system, sensation resulted from harmonious or disharmonious vibration in the nexus, which directly led to human understanding.[203] The immortal soul, Swedenborg contended, is born from the body, is enlarged by it, and grows with it.[204] It is the largest part of the body (*anima est maxima pars in corpore*) because it represents the most subtle element into each of the membranes, nerves, fibres, tendons, liquors and humors.[205]

In another 1733 manuscript entitled *Generaliter de Motu Elementorum*, Swedenborg outlined in a Lockean fashion that the forms of the fibres, the muscles of the body and cerebellum are predetermined, while the rest of the brain structure is modulated by education and everyday use.[206] Echoing Descartes's famous attempts to locate the soul in the pineal gland, Swedenborg speculated in sketches that the soul must be lodged

[201] A. Acton, *Psychologica being notes and observations on Christian Wolf's Psychologia Empirica by E. Swedenborg.* (Bryn Athyn, 2009), x. For a summary of Codex 88 entries showing how Swedenborg explored physics, anatomy and theology side by side, see Codex 88 transcript on Alvin.
[202] Stroh, *Treatises*, 'Mechanism of soul and body', pp. 123, 125, 128.
[203] Stroh, *Treatises*, p. 133.
[204] Stroh, *Treatises*, pp. 141-2.
[205] Stroh, *Treatises*, p. 139.
[206] Jonsson, *Visionary Scientist*, pp.44-5. See also Ryder, I, p.340 and Codex 88.

especially in the fibrous and membranous parts, and is 'especially' spread through the 'whole of the brain'.[207]

Similarly to Plato's *Timaeus,* Swedenborg contended that the immortal soul must have a perfect spheric form, with characteristics such as being most flexible and elastic, impossible to damage, and extracted by angels after carnal death.[208] Although the lowest parts of the soul perish with death and putrefaction, Swedenborg argued in contrast to mortalist positions of thinkers such as Thomas Hobbes and John Milton (to only mention writers whom he reviewed) that the soul in itself cannot putrefy, nor 'perish from fire, air nor otherwise'.[209] The passions, he wrote, must be transmitted by dilatation and contraction within the soul and the nerves and muscles, which are in return obedient to it by means of the soul's elasticity, a typically Cartesian property.[210]

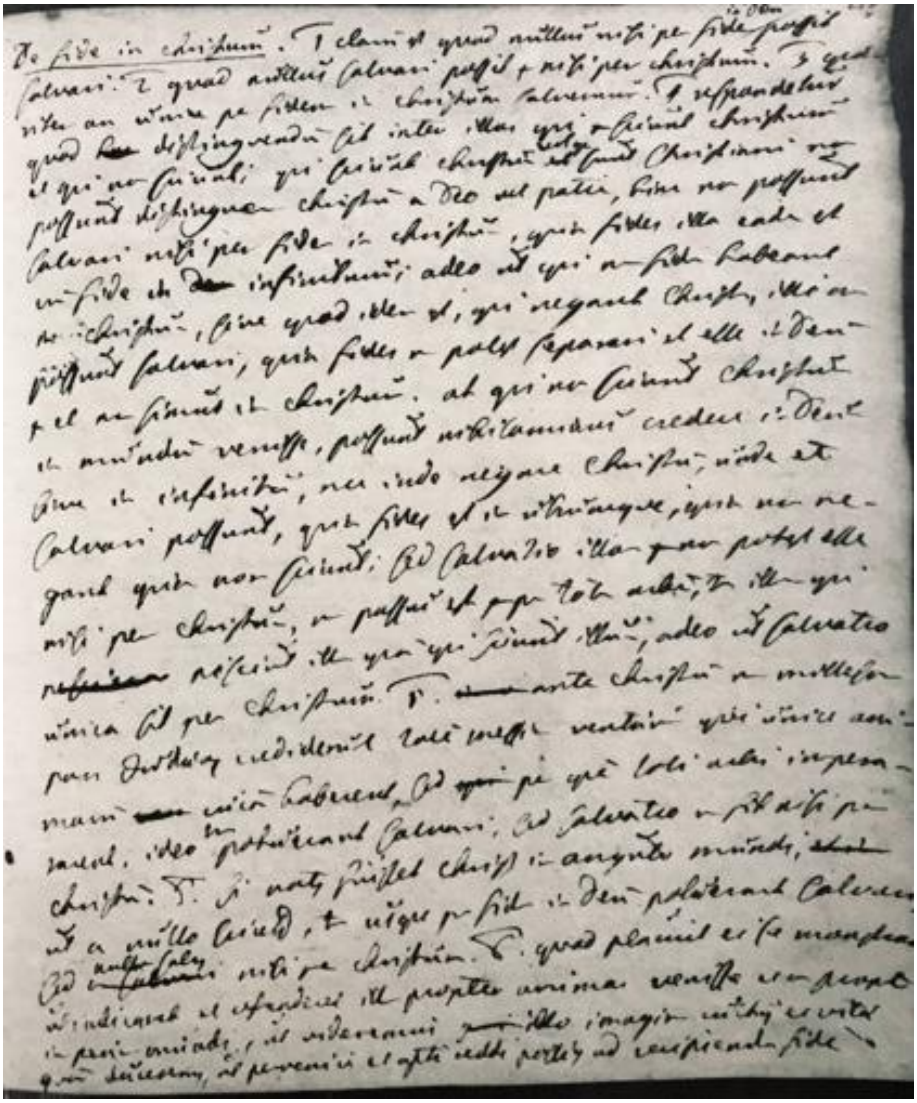
Despite an enduring debt to Cartesian iatromechanics, Swedenborg's vibratory soul-body research nevertheless witnessed major updates under the influence of the philosophy of Christian Wolff (1679-1754). While a non-extant correspondence between Wolff and Swedenborg has long been known to have taken place, recent scholarship has revised their relationship further by highlighting that Wolff had reviewed at least seven of Swedenborg's early scientific works (from 1722 until 1734) while several exchanges took place between the two regarding mechanics, metallurgy, physics and mathematics.[211] Scholars remain divided as to whether the two met in person at some point.[212] By the time Swedenborg engaged with Wolff's soul-body ideas in 1733, the

[207] Stroh, *Treatises,* p. 140, and 130.
[208] Stroh, *Treatises,* p. 132, Jonsson, *Visionary Scientist,* p.46, Plato, *Timée et Critias* (Paris, 2011), p. 87.
[209] Stroh, *Treatises,* pp. 145-6. On Hobbes, Milton and mortalism, see M. Pfeffer, 'Christian materialism and the prospect of immortality', *Science without God,* P. Harrison and John Roberts (eds), (Oxford, 2019), pp. 151-2.
[210] Stroh, *Treatises,* p. 140.
[211] L. Follesa, 'A Comparison of Wolff's and Kant's Receptions of Emanuel Swedenborg', *Kant-Studien,* 112(1) (2021), p. 3, 14-5. See also A. H. Laeven and L. J. M. Laeven-Aretz, *Acta Eruditorum and their reviewers 1682-1735* (Molenhoek, 2014) pp. 86-7. For reference to Swedenborg's lost correspondence with Wolff, see Acton, *Letters,* II, p. 767.
[212] Follesa, *Comparison,* p. 13.

latter was teaching at the University of Marburg in the Landgraviate of Hesse-Kassel, in personal union with the crown of Sweden through Frederick I. On 19 July 1733, Swedenborg discovered Wolff's *Cosmologia Generalis* in Dresden, and he studied it with a particular interest for his *Onthologiae* and *Cosmologiae*.[213] Swedenborg soon acquired a copy of his *Psychologica Empirica* (1732, Leipzig and Halle) which provided him with a basis for a comparison between his own tremulation model and Wolff's from December 1733 to February 1734.[214] In line with Wolff (and perhaps by growing Pietist sentiments), Swedenborg's new work underlined the crucial place of faith in philosophical investigation, and how a well-designed soul-body system naturally led to defeating atheism. Knowledge of the soul, he wrote, allows to 'deduce' that there is a God, while postulating that the soul is 'secret' and unknowable eventually prevents one's from observing it, a form of epistemological bias which, he claimed, directly ushers into atheism and naturalism.[215] In a , Swedenborg wrote that lack of faith would dissipate, if only mankind could 'see all things with the eyes of angels'.[216] In an echo of Polhem's work on spirits (but also showcasing his later view about the formerly human nature of angels) Swedenborg wrote that angels acted as the 'media and natural causes of divine providence' 'with souls similar to ours'.[217]

[213] For reference of Wolff's books in Swedenborg's library, see Bergquist, *Secret*, p.481. See also Ryder, I, pp. 356-7.
[214] See Acton, *Psychologica*, xii. For a summary of the manuscript's context of composition and reference to the date of composition at the end of the year 1733, see Ryder, I, p. 356. For reference to Swedenborg's transcripts of Wolff's *Empirica*, see Ryder, I, p. 363.
[215] Stroh, *Treatises*, p. 133.
[216] Stroh, *Treatises*, p. 134.
[217] Stroh, *Treatises*, pp. 136-7.

FIGURE 5 : *De Fide in Christum*. Codex 88, p. 213 (1733). Lithographic reproduction. The Swedenborg Society.



The linking of Swedenborg's soul-body research to apologetics coincided with the redaction of his first theological manuscript, the one-page long *De Fide in Christum* (*Faith in Christ*, 1733) a condensed exposition of beliefs which he would continue to develop and refine until the end of his life. The emergence of Swedenborg's first theological programme within his soul-body research not only highlights the theme's central aspect: it points to a much earlier and gradual religious 'turn' than previously assessed from 1733 onwards. The manuscript featured seven propositions, in which Swedenborg openly rejected the then-prevalent Lutheran dogma of *sola fide* and affirmed his burgeoning anti-Trinitarianism: no distinction can be made by true believers between

Christ, God and the Father, he wrote: the deity behind those three aspects of the divine was equated, again in the line of Descartes, with 'the Infinite'.[218] Swedenborg still subscribed at the time to the Paulinian doctrine of vicarious atonement, a view he would gradually come to reject in his *Arcana Coelestia* (1749-1756), leaving room for his personal interpretation already outlined in *De Fide in Christum*, that God revealed himself as Christ mainly to allow a more effective form of faith and worship in a spiritually lapsing world.[219]

The mystery of divine incarnation was intrinsically concerned with the interaction of soul and body, and would later become an enduring theme of discussion for Swedenborg, in the context of his critical take on the Athanasian creed and the wider complex relationship of Protestantism to the issue, highlighted by Servetus's relationship to Calvin.[220] Although Swedenborg did not read Michael Servetus, he shared with the unitarian heretic a common rooting in the writings of Tertullian, a similar emphasis on the oneness of God, a rejection of the Nicene trinity, and of Chalcedonian dualism.[221] More broadly, Swedenborg's efforts to link his upcoming soul-body research to apologetics highlights how anatomical and philosophical discussions about soul-body increasingly functioned as quasi-secular counterparts to older theological debates about incarnation, hypostatic union and trinitarianism.

IV. Swedenborg's first major soul-body work: *De Infinito* (1734)

a) From Cartesian physics to Wolffian physico-theology (May 1734)

After Swedenborg had finished writing the manuscripts of his *Principia*, he waited for completion of the printing process, which included numerous ornaments and engravings.

[218] See also, for an English translation of *Faith in Christ*, see A. Acton, *Psychological Transactions* (Bryn Athyn, 1984) pp. 3-4.
[219] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 14.
[220] A. Dibb, *Servetus, Swedenborg, and the nature of God* (Lanham, 2005).
[221] Dibb, *Servetus*, xiv-xv. On Swedenborg reading Tertullian's *De Anima*, see *Notebook*, p. 534.

It was during this time that he produced a programmatic treatise based on his 1733 manuscripts, exploring the nature of God and its links to the interaction between soul and body, titled *Prodromus philosophiae ratiocinantis de Infinito, et Causa finali creationis: deque mechanismo operationis animae et corporis* (*On the Infinite, the final cause of creation and the mechanism between soul and body*).[222] *De Infinito* aimed to demonstrate that the soul is organic and that its seat is in the cortex of the brain.[223] It strived to reconcile reason with faith, theology and natural philosophy, and fight materialism leading to atheism. Its metaphysics were based on geometry, inductive reasoning, physico-theology and vibratory mechanics.

Dedicated to Eric Benzelius, Swedenborg divided his *De Infinito* in two chapters, preceded by one short preface, with the book's title being a combination of the subtitles of the two chapters. The book was quickly printed by Swedenborg's publisher Frederic Hekel and released simultaneously with his *Principia* in May 1734. *De Infinito* referred to various sections of Swedenborg's *Principia*, effectively linking the two works about its 'first element', a constituent both of the soul and of the solar and stellar vortices.[224] *De Infinito* marked the formal transition between his *Opera Philosophica et Mineralia* and a new, ambitious soul-body programme, which he wrote, would require a whole 'series of volumes' to be written, taking into account 'all that anatomy has discovered in the body'.[225] Swedenborg's goal in doing so was to 'demonstrate the immortality of the soul the very senses' (*Ut ipsis sensibus demonstretur animæ immortalitas*).[226] As we will see in the next chapter, the story of the forms taken by this (over) ambitious follow-up would occupy Swedenborg for the next ten years.

[222] Ryder, I, p. 364.
[223] *De Cerebro*, xx.
[224] *De Infinito* p. 193. See also 196 and 226 as pointing references to the *Principia*.
[225] *De Infinito*, p. 181.
[226] *De Infinito*, p. 230.

b) The infinite Cartesian God: *causa sui*, mathematical point, and the *contiguum*

Like Descartes, Swedenborg contended that only God is infinite, thus excluding infinity from the realm of nature.[227] The infinite God, he declared, is both its own cause (*causa sui*) and the cause of nature, different from its creation and yet devoid of all parts, terms and modes.[228] Swedenborg labelled the infinite as the 'primordial seed' of nature, an ovum in the line of classic egg-like metaphysics which, as we will see in later chapters, would reappear later in his hexameral poem *De Cultu et Amore Dei* (1745).[229]

Swedenborg defined his iatromechanical God as an ontological 'mathematical point' of Wolffian inspiration, based on Euclid's famous *Elementa* definition as 'a point is devoid of any part'.[230] This mathematical point, Swedenborg wrote, possessed both an abstract and concrete existence, and acted as the mean through which the infinite God put the universe into mechanical motion, in the same way that a point allows geometrical forms to be drawn and manifested into space.[231] Swedenborg's concept of the ontological point stemmed both from his reading of Wolff and his early research on infinitesimal calculus. In 1718, Swedenborg had published *Regelkonsten* (Uppsala, 1718) Sweden's first introductory treatise on algebra, mathematical simplification and infinitesimal calculus in Swedish.[232]

Although separated in nature and perfection, Swedenborg believed the divine and its creation to be united by a paradoxical *contiguum* or nexus of finite nature, similarly to God and man, and the soul and the body.[233] This dualist *contiguum* he contended, is reflected at all levels: between God and its creation, between God and Christ, God and

[227] *De Infinito*, p. 23
[228] *De Infinito*, pp. 27-8. On God different from nature, see 25 and 29.
[229] On primordial seed, see *De Infinito*, p. 31. On ovum, see p. 35
[230] D. Dunér, *Den Matematiska Punkten* (Stockholm, 2014) pp. 43-5.
[231] See also *Principia*, xxiv.
[232] *De Infinito*, p. 12. See also Rodhe, *Regelkonsten*.
[233] *De Infinito*, p. 165. On the finite *contiguum*, see 193, 195.

the human soul, between the human soul and the body.[234] Such *contigui* are based on principles of love and mutual reflection, related and responding to each other, a relationship which, as we will see later, he would come to express in the late 1730s under the term *correspondentia*. Swedenborg's emphasis on love in his metaphysics represents an original Pietist addition with characteristic terms such as 'love of the self' (*amor seu*) making a first appearance in *De Infinito* before becoming later key concepts in his theology. [235]

c) Adamic body, the human soul, and angels

Like most early modern natural philosophers, Swedenborg's soul-body research explored the consequences of the Fall on human condition, and took a stance on whether mankind might one day be able to restore the lost prelapsarian powers of the primordial Adamic body. From Bacon to Descartes, securing the prolongation of life and bodily health as featured in Adamic times was a priority, because such a condition, along with a sound body was crucial to the exercise of reason and for the lasting accumulation of knowledge.[236] Swedenborg did not view sin as the direct cause of the corruption of the prelapsarian Adamic body, but rather as the element which disturbed an optimal coordination originally set by God. The first man was 'immortal' and 'purer' he wrote, because his body was 'completely governed' by the 'pure essence of the soul', a state then disturbed by the original sin which let 'the connection between God and the soul' 'perish' and 'degeneration' to ensue.[237]

This represented an original intermediary position between then-dominant Catholic supernaturalism which regarded the loss of Adamic immortality as the withdrawal of a miraculous gift from God, and more naturalist views prevalent within Protestant

[234] God and its creation, p. 137. Infinite to the soul, p. p. 177-8, micro-macro, p. 137-8.
[235] *De Infinito*, p. 178.
[236] Harrison, *Fall of Man*, p. 170.
[237] *De Infinito*, p. 179.

Christendom which presented Adamic immortality as a by-default state corrupted by original sin.[238] In line with the above-mentioned Thomist positions, Swedenborg claimed that Adam's body was functionally and substantially no different than current human bodies. However, in line with post-Reformed thinkers, he also contended that sin acted as the cause behind sickness and mortality, writing that 'immutability and immortality' of the physical body have become replaced my 'mutability and mortality'. In the line of Bacon and Descartes, Swedenborg claimed that such a state could theoretically be reversed.[239] The main requirement would be to be born free from the disturbing influence of hereditary original sin.[240] Although this remained a mere thought experiment in *De Infinito*, as we will see, Swedenborg would later go further in his follow-up *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* (1740) by presenting his knowledge of the human soul as the key to achieve the long-sought return to primordial soul-body coordination.[241]

Freed from the disruptive corruption triggered by the Fall, Swedenborg believed the default state of the human body to be physical immortality, a condition which mirrored the immortality of the human soul and supposedly translated in everyday life in the natural aspiration to parenthood and posterity.[242] Such an aspect points to how Swedenborg articulated his early Christology in relation to the Adamic Fall, by arguing that the ultimate purpose of mankind is to acknowledge and worship the infinite God through Christ, and to find delight in the love of God. Although such an end became hindered by the Fall, Swedenborg maintained that God has since restored the nexus of the Infinite with the finite by taking a human form as Christ.[243] As a result, the telos of post-lapsarian corporeity is to prepare the soul for heaven.[244] The soul he wrote, possesses

[238] Harrison, *Fall of Man*, pp. 170-1.
[239] On Bacon and Descartes, see Harrison, *Fall of Man*, pp. 169-70.
[240] *De Infinito*, p. 180.
[241] *OERA*, §331, II, p. 323.
[242] *De Infinito*, p. 176.
[243] *De Infinito*, p. 124. See also p. 133.
[244] *De Infinito*, p. 230.

both passive and active principles, which permit its motion and allows it to survive carnal death, to suffer, feel, and live beyond it. [245]

In line with Leibniz and Wolff, Swedenborg believed the soul to be indestructible.[246] The soul he contended, cannot be harmed by any of the elements as it is made of the most subtle and smallest components which exist in nature, a view closer to Leibniz's *Monadologie* than the divisible corpuscularianism of Descartes, Gassendi, Boyle and Newton.[247] As a result, Swedenborg argued that something theoretically capable of destroying a human soul would by reaction destroy the whole universe, since both are formed of similar minimal units.[248] Swedenborg's then proximity to the Leibnizian monad also highlights his scepticism towards atomism. Based on further readings from Leibniz's *Theodicy*, he associated ancient atomists with one-substance monism ('Monophyschites') noting that, according to French physician, India traveler and Gassendi translator François Bernier (1620-1688) such a doctrine was agreed 'almost everywhere in Persia and in the territories of the great Mogul; and both the cabalists and mystics do not seem far from it.'[249] In the same passage, Swedenborg also noted it was 'evident that Spinoza recognised only one substance in the world' while he attributed the end of mortalist views amongst 'Averroists' and ancient atomists to the rise of corpuscular theory.[250]

However, in contrast to Leibniz who defined Monads as devoid of Cartesian extension, Swedenborg still retained a Cartesian approach to the soul, which he argued must exists under two forms in the body. First, as an extended active force, contained within the

[245] *De Infinito*, p. 158.
[246] Dunér, *Natural Philosophy*, p. 381.
[247] Leibniz, *Monadologie* (Paris, 1997), §1-7.
[248] *De Infinito*, p. 166.
[249] *Notebook*, p. 303.
[250] *Notebook*, p. 303.

subtlest cerebral membranes, and which does not in itself occupy space.[251] Second, as a most subtle liquid (the Cartesian *spiritus animales*) of most minimal extended materiality, circulating across the body through its membranes and nerves. Swedenborg scholars have argued that such a compromise most likely represented his attempt to bypass Wolf's opinion that spatiality of the soul leads to materialism.[252] Although Swedenborg strongly objected against materialism, he nonetheless regarded the soul and its animal spirits as quantifiable, subject to laws and finite, in an attempt to present an organicist definition of the soul based on quantifiable properties and attributes.[253] The immortal, indestructible, most minimal soul he claimed, is the 'most perfect form of the finite', a 'simple, pure and most perfect active'.[254]As a result, Swedenborg classified the soul as 'a part among the physical constituents of the body'. [255] The soul he wrote, ends in the organic body which is the '*Regnum Animale*', the reign or domain of the soul, a taxonomic reference which as we will see, would become the title of his largest soul-body study ten years later.[256]

We can also note that *De Infinito* saw Swedenborg elaborate on his recent manuscript statements about the nature of angels. At that time, Swedenborg did not yet identify angels (nor demons) as former humans who had spiritually evolved, but still as distinct entities who possessed similar souls to humans, albeit superior in sensitivity, purity and wisdom.[257] As a result, Swedenborg regarded angels and spirits as finite beings.[258] He later copied from Augustine in his 1740s notebook that 'angels are corporeal, although

[251] For reference to the soul having extension, see *De Infinito*, pp. 151-3. For reference to the soul being an active not occupying space, see p. 226. For a definition of Swedenborg's concept of an 'active', see *Principia*, I, chap. 5, p. 120.
[252] Dunér, *Natural Philosophy*, p. 382.
[253] *De Infinito*, pp. 143-4.
[254] *De Infinito*, p. 158.
[255] *De Infinito*, p. 161.
[256] *De Infinito*, p. 164.
[257] *De Infinito*, pp. 18, 23.
[258] *De Infinito*, p. 227.

they do not live in the flesh' and are 'circumscribed by space, as also is the human soul enclosed in flesh; and likewise demons, who by substance are of angelic nature'.[259]

d) Harmonic tremulations, location of the soul and the double *contiguum*

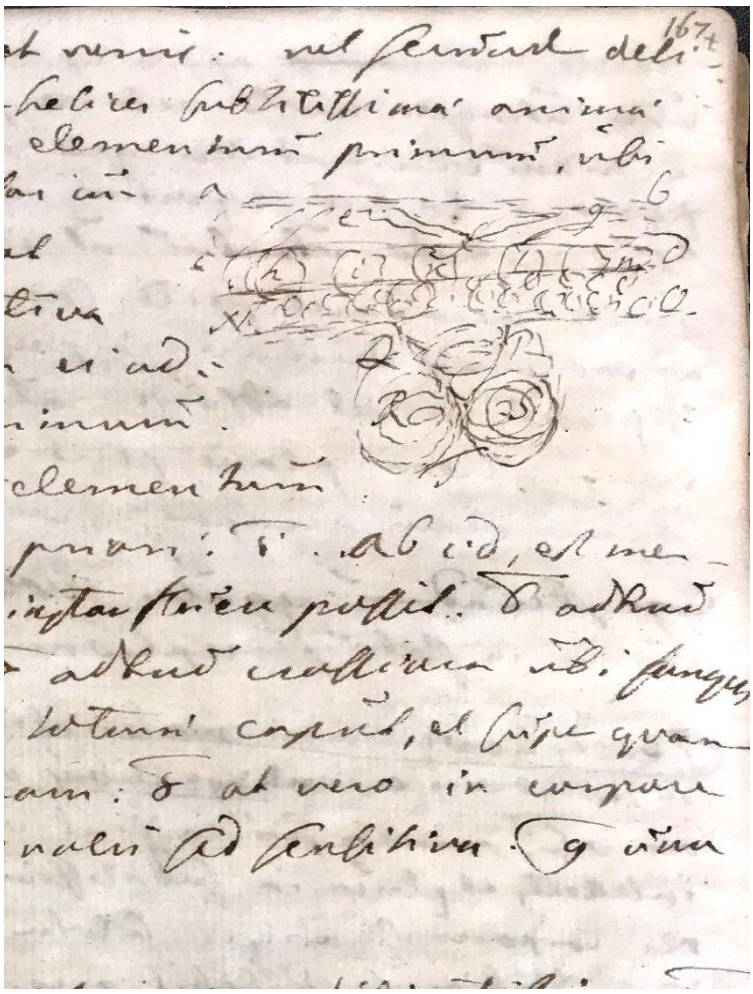
Trembling and vibration through subtle membranes still represented a crucial part of the mechanistic soul-body model outlined in *De Infinito*. However, in contrast to the harmonic vibratory sympathies explored twelve years earlier and his more recent synthesis between Cartesian animal spirits and Leibnizian monadism, Swedenborg toned down his ill-received statements on thought-transfer, writing that 'the soul is so connected to the body that it cannot communicate its activity to any other body but its own'.[260] As we will see, he would take back those statements again and reassert the possibility of thought-transfer in the 1740s.

However, Swedenborg remained committed to offer his own take on the much-debated Cartesian animal spirits, the cerebral location of the human soul, and the problematic soul-body *contiguum*. Although most philosophers publicly regarded the Cartesian *spiritus animales* as unsatisfying agents of the action of the soul, Swedenborg lamented that growing numbers of thinkers privately doubted the very existence of the soul, a position which led to atheism and called for an urgent resolution. Descartes's pineal gland theory had been famously criticised by another Scandinavian geologist turned cerebral anatomist turned theologian, the Dane Nicolas Steno (1638-1686), triggering a controversy with French physician Louis de La Forge.[261] Like many, Swedenborg regarded Steno as an anatomical authority, and he excluded the soul to be located in a single gland like Descartes.[262] However, he also excluded the soul to be spread over the

[259] *Notebook*, p. 15.
[260] *De Infinito*, p. 144.
[261] V. Grigoropoulou, 'Steno's Critique of Descartes and Louis de La Forge's Response', in M. Laerke and R. Andrault (eds.) *Steno and the philosophers* (Leiden, 2018) pp. 113-37.
[262] *Notebook*, p. 503.

whole body as suggested by Comenius in the latter's *Orbis Sensualium pictus* (1658) and as he had himself hypothesised in his own 1733 manuscript *De Mechanismo animae et corporis*.[263] As a pure active, Swedenborg believed at that time that the soul must be located where the finest membranes would tentatively be found, viz. in the 'cortical' and 'medullary substance' of the cerebrum'.[264] The soul would be spread and contained there within several most subtle membranes in forms varying from one man to another, which would explain variations amongst people's ability to reason or 'conspire with the pleasures of the body'.[265]

FIGURE 6 : Swedenborg's sketch of the cerebral membranes enclosing the human soul. Codex 88, p. 167 (1733). KVA.



[263] See Dunér *Natural Philosophy*, p.381 and Stroh, *Treatises*, p.139. See also *De Infinito*, p. 226
[264] *De Infinito*, pp. 222-3.
[265] *De Infinito*, p.225.

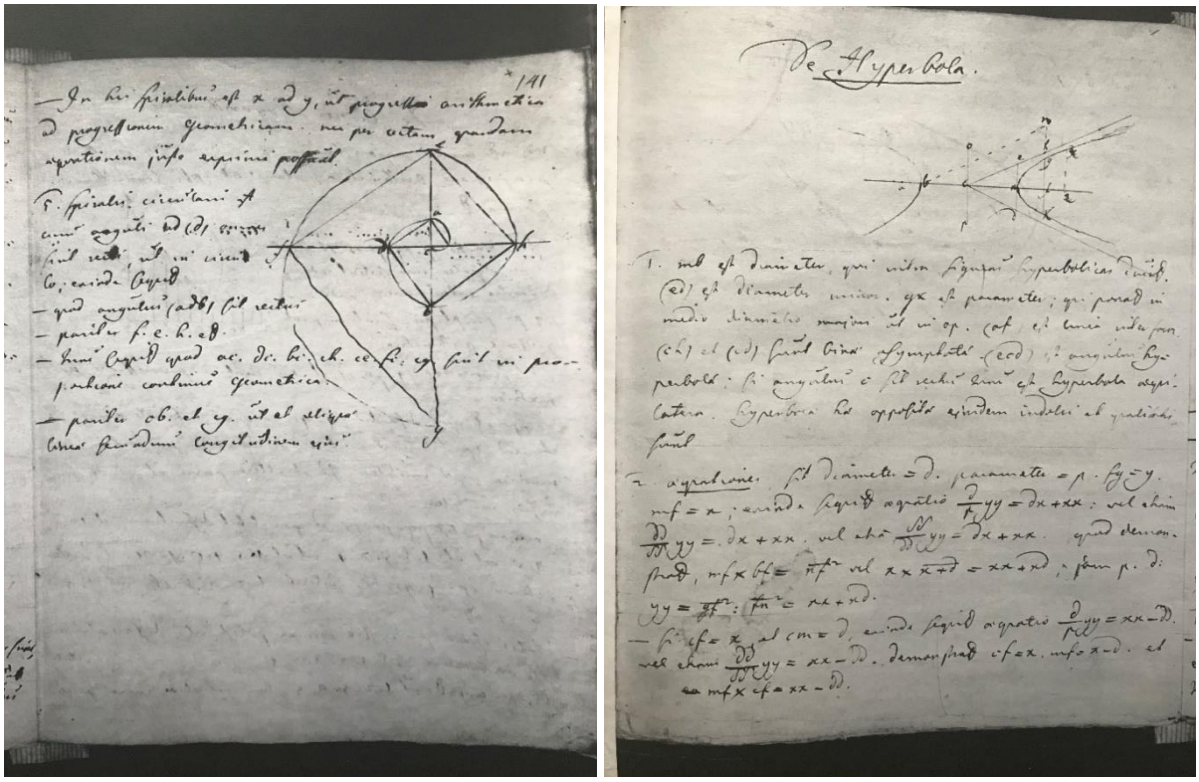
Animal spirits, Swedenborg contended, could similarly not merely exist by themselves, but must be similarly contained within 'most subtle membranes' made of the same elemental particles than the soul across the whole body, by analogy to the increasingly small veins and fleshy membranes known to surround human bones or fat.[266] These invisible subtle membranes, Swedenborg inferred, must cover the whole insides of the human body to increasing levels of subtlety still impossible to observe with current microscopes. Such a model would result in a universal flexi-tension at all levels within the body, a continuity allegedly evidenced by the well-known correlation between blood rush, the swelling of arterial membranes and the joint 'alteration in the muscles', 'senses' and the 'imaginative faculty'.[267] In other words, the effects of blood circulation were never only mechanical: they always had an impact on the human soul, observable via the mood swings they came with.

For Swedenborg, the criticisms against Descartes's elusive *contiguum* stemmed from the fact that the great French philosopher had stopped short from describing what was actually a double *contiguum* present within the body (*contiguum elementare cum contiguo corporeo*). [268] The first one, he claimed, was an 'elemental *contiguum*' operating at most subtle level with the soul, its invisible fluids and invisible membranes, whilst the second 'bodily *contiguum*' consisted of a wider interaction between its observable fluids and membranes. This dual circulatory, iatromechanical model was supposed to provide a satisfactory solution to Descartes's 'occult' *spiritus animales*, which Swedenborg noted, had been abundantly criticised as arbitrarily 'obeying the volition of the soul'.[269] His new system, he claimed, placed the soul under mathematical and mechanically-governed 'laws of harmonic proportion' 'always in relation to distance from a centre'.[270] Such laws

[266] *De Infinito*, p. 206.
[267] *De Infinito*, p. 208.
[268] *De Infinito*, p. 210.
[269] *De Infinito*, pp. 167-8, 212.
[270] *De Infinito*, pp. 213-4.

drew on his own mathematical research in Paris with French mathematician Pierre Varignon about the spiral and the hyperbola.[271] The geometrical properties of the spiral, he noted, were mechanical, unchanging and infinite, which were all great qualities to systematise the laws underlying the action of the human soul in the body:[272]

FIGURE 7 : Extracts from Swedenborg's manuscript *Geometrica & Algebraica* (1713) detailing the geometrical characteristics assigned to the soul by Swedenborg's *De Infinito* (1734). Codex 65, p.141 (the Spiral) p. 114 (the Hyperbole). Lithographic reproduction. The Swedenborg Society.



e) *Quia non vides, nulla est ratio*: natural theology, reason, and 'half-philosophers'

Although as a theologian Swedenborg would later strongly reject Wolff and condemn natural theology, two years before the latter's *Theologia Naturalis* (1736), his own *De Infinito* exhibited strong physico-theological overtones, which might have been a

[271] *De Infinito*, pp. 213-4.
[272] Dunér *Natural Philosophy*, p. 304. See also *Principia*, I, pp. 106-10.

reflection of his discussions with Polhem.[273] The contemplation of nature, he wrote, leads to an acknowledgment of God, while the worship of nature in itself can lead to worship of the deity, although a philosopher must be wary of becoming a 'worshipper of nature' 'by his own imperfect investigations and analyses'.[274] At the time and following Descartes, Swedenborg believed reason to be implanted in man by his soul, 'for the soul is of God' and has the function to comprehend the end and final cause.[275] As in the Adamic body, he viewed the faculty of reason as resulting from a balanced coordination between the soul, the body and the corporeal senses. [276] Swedenborg described reason as the first faculty which allows the soul to be instructed via the body and its organs.[277]

However, deeply preoccupied with reconciling faith and reason, Swedenborg affirmed that the ultimate purpose of reason was to perceive things created and revealed. Following his own readings of Leibniz's *De Conformitate Fidei cum Ratione*, Swedenborg agreed that what is rational can never be contrary to the divine, and that mankind has been endowed with reason first and foremost to perceive God and worship him.[278] Human reason is limited: certain mysteries are by essence above reason, although it does not mean that they contradict it. Indeed, human reason is repeatedly referred to as an 'oracle' and a 'tribunal', which will always reach its limit when coming to the Infinite. [279] Investigating philosophically and experimentally the existence and nature of the soul is a religious duty, and *De Infinito* aimed to present a 'truly rational philosophy' never in contradiction with 'revelation'.[280]

[273] ES, §4722.
[274] *De Infinito*, pp. 37-8 and 44.
[275] *De Infinito*, p. 111.
[276] *De Infinito*, p. 221.
[277] *De Infinito*, p. 5.
[278] *De Infinito*, p. 6. On Leiniz's *De Conformitate*, see *Notebook*, p. 529.
[279] *De Infinito*, p. 9.
[280] *De Infinito*, p. 5.

Overall, in philosophical inquiry Swedenborg contended that 'reason takes over where the eye ceases' (*Ubi definit oculus, incipiet ratio*).[281] Like many of his peers, we have seen how he acknowledged the problem of the soul to be elusive to empirical study. Nevertheless, Swedenborg argued in line with Wolff that evidence of what cannot be observed can still be inferred. Mechanical and geometrical laws apply to what is too small to be observed, according to the micro-macro principle that 'nothing happens in the grosser world but its principles lie in the subtler'.[282] To produce a knowledge of the infinitesimal soul he argued, philosophical induction is not only needed, but represents the best method.[283] As a corollary of such a manifesto, not seeing the soul is not enough to falsify its existence, an argument summarised in the formula *quia non vides, nulla est ratio* ('the circumstance of not seeing is no reason at all').[284]

At best, positing the non-existence of the soul signals a renouncement in front of scholarly adversity. It not only defies reason: it is dangerous. Swedenborg was no short of contempt against those guilty of such renouncements and of tricking themselves into negative opinions about the soul through 'false reasonings': he dismissed them as *demiphilosophos* ('half philosophers').[285] Failing to observe the soul, he contended, is nothing more than the result of sensory and technological limitations. In contrast, denying the soul's existence irremediably demonstrates a lack of faith in God, since the divine did provide an observable nexus through Christ. The advancement of science is constantly invoked as the means through which evidence for the mechanical nature of the soul will eventually be obtained. At the moment, such knowledge is beyond reach, yet Swedenborg contended, it might soon be obtained: 'And why not at the present day? So

[281] *De Infinito*, p. 206.
[282] *De Infinito*, pp. 146, 177.
[283] *De Infinito*, p. 148.
[284] *De Infinito*, pp. 149-50.
[285] *De Infinito*, p. 172.

as to forestall our posterity, and prevent them [the learned] from laughing at us as we ourselves now laugh of the old philosophers'.[286]

f) Return to Sweden and focus on soul-body (July 1734)

In February 1734, Swedenborg had been abroad for nine months and he asked for an extension (which he duly obtained) before returning to Stockholm after fourteen months in total, in July 1734. The three volume *Opera* were printed by Hekel in Leipzig and sold simultaneously with *De Infinito* in May 1734.[287] Although the *Principia* met with a lukewarm response (some critics panned the physics of the work as 'incomprehensible') its two volumes on the 'mineral reigns', iron and copper received much more favourable reviews, establishing Swedenborg as one of the leading geological and metallurgical expert in Europe.[288] Swedenborg sent copies of his three volume *Opera* to the Royal Society in London (with Martin Folkes receiving a copy) and the Russian Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg.[289] At forty-six years old, Swedenborg was finally obtaining some of the international recognition he had so eagerly sought. Nevertheless, the release of his *Opera* in 1734 marked the conclusion of his publications on mining matters, and the reorientation of his efforts towards soul-body interaction for the next decade (1735-1745).

[286] *De Infinito*, p. 170.
[287] Ryder, I, pp. 371-2.
[288] Ryder, I, pp. 382-7. For reception of these works, see Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 455.
[289] Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 465-6. *Catalogue of the library of Martin Folkes*, p. 78/168, quarto section, number 2449.

Chapter II

Anatomical studies: travels, politics and restoring the Adamic body (1735-1739)

Introduction

This second chapter examines the anatomical turn taken by Swedenborg's career at the Bureau of Mines, and the struggles prompted by his research on soul-body interaction during the period. Although Swedenborg's situation at the college had been fully regularised by 1730, his research continued to meet with defiance from censors and estranged influential family members. In a context of increased persecution of Pietism in Sweden, the death in 1735 of Swedenborg's Pietist father strengthened Swedenborg's own religious development. Following his father's death, Swedenborg left abroad again for four years, to retrain as an anatomist and devote himself fully to his soul-body research, this time with newly-secured financial autonomy. The chapter explores his travels to France, Italy and Holland, and analyzes his two highly-technical works produced during the period: his milestone manuscript about the brain *Transactionum de Cerebro* (1736-1738, Paris and Venice) and his first published anatomical work about the soul: *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* (London and Amsterdam, 1740-1741). Careful study of these works shows an intense activity in the hope of coining a new systematic 'science of the soul' to restore the prelapsarian abilities enjoyed by Adam and Eve. This restoration, placed in the context of a wider revival of Augustinian ideas about the Fall within Protestantism during the period, was to be achieved by controlling the soul's highest powers, thus facilitating the cure of physical deformities, the intuitive knowledge of all sciences, and the attainment of carnal immortality. Close analysis of Swedenborg's manuscripts also highlights the emergence of the key terms 'correspondence', 'influx'

and ‘degrees’ and how these terms were first used as anatomical concepts to study the soul, before being later refashioned into theological ideas. This reveals an overlooked continuity between Swedenborg’s anatomical and theological writings, and positions the topic of soul-body at the centre of his intellectual development. Finally, the chapter also examines Swedenborg’s relationship to the political context of the time, the rise to power of his allies and his own opposition to war with Russia, as a travelling parliamentarian with vested political and financial interests.

I. Censorship of new research and the death of Jesper Swedberg (1735)

a) War against Russia, Hat allies, and a promiscuous king (1734)

After returning to Stockholm during the summer of 1734, Swedenborg joined the new parliamentary session and prepared a draft of memorial for the Secret Committee (*Sekreta Utskottet*) against entering a new war with Russia.[1] The Secret Committee was a restricted, constitutionally officious mini-parliament within the Swedish *Riksdag*, dealing with sensitive matters related to foreign policy and finance. It consisted of 50 noblemen, 25 burghers and 25 clergymen, with peasant representatives being excluded. The Committee, presided by count Arvid Horn, was dominated by the nobility and fractured along the Caps and Hats party lines. Although not a member himself, Swedenborg had prominent Hat allies in the Secret Committee, from Carl Gyllenborg to his two brothers-in-law Eric Benzelius and Lars Benzelstierna. Swedenborg counted on their political support to unlock the upcoming necessary funding and leave of absences for his new soul-body research. Nevertheless, he vocally opposed the Hat revanchist plans of war against Russia, with his memorial supporting instead the policy of Arvid Horn, the ageing leader of the Caps party.[2] Having personally witnessed Sweden’s defeats against Russia

[1] Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 467-8.
[2] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 468.

during the last campaigns of the Great Northern War, Swedenborg still believed that the Russian army was vastly superior to Sweden, and that his country would be incapable of sustaining a long war. Defeat was not only inevitable, he argued, but would bring dire consequences for the country for the next twenty years.[3] To his distress in November 1734 the Secret Committee sided with the Hats: Swedish policy should aim for friendship with France, destruction of Russia and support for the king Stanislaus of Poland.[4] However, on 4 December 1734 a more cautious compromise was reached: since the destruction of Russia could not be realistically achieved for now, Russia ought at least to be excluded from a commanding position in the Baltic sea.[5]

Those preoccupying plans intersected with moral scandals at the highest level of the State which were worsening the unsolved succession dispute. In the year 1735, king Frederick I was embroiled in a great controversy generated by his affair with the young Hedvig Taube (1714-1744). Since his failed coup in 1723 to restore royal absolutism, Frederick had not only become politically powerless, but also widely unpopular, thus strengthening the rival Duke of Holstein pretender supported by the Hats. The king's unruly sexual behavior became a political issue when his affair with Taube produced an illegitimate daughter in 1734, while queen Ulrika Eleonora remained childless.[6] Tensions continued to increase after Frederick made Hedvig Taube the first official 'royal mistress' in Swedish history and had two further out-of-wedlock children with her. From his memorial's statements about the Swedish succession, it is clear that Swedenborg exhibited little consideration for Frederick: the king he wrote, was a weak leader who could never lead his soldiers to any victory on the battleground, unlike the great Swedish

[3] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 468.
[4] Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 467-8.
[5] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 468.
[6] F.G. Lindh, *Swedenborgs Ekonomi*, Sept. Oct. (1929), p. 87.

warrior-kings of old.[7] Worse, a new war he wrote, would bring further Russian interference to the succession dispute aggravated by Frederick's repeated adulteries.

Swedenborg was a reluctant witness of the king's debauched behavior through his acquaintance with the Hat politician Erland Broman (1704-1757) the king's favourite and personal purveyor of lovers, whom Swedenborg despised.[8] Swedenborg later had financial dealings with the latter's brother Carl, a relative of the Gyllenborg family. In his private drafts of *experientiae spirituales*, Swedenborg later described Frederick as a debauched spirit interested above all in luring wives and women to his court, a vain man obsessed with the production of gold, surrounding himself with the company of magicians and sorcerers.[9] Such a description tackled both Frederick's affair with Taube, the king's loose morals, but also his rumoured interest in the fanciful chrysopoeic quest. Nevertheless, Swedenborg was forced to tone down his criticisms. Although he made his opposition to the war plans known in the *Riksdag*, he likely refrained from formally submitting his memorial, in hope of gaining support from the king and Hat officials for his new research.[10]

b) A personal feud with the *censor librorum:* withdrawal of *De Anima* (April 1735)

Carrying his parliamentary activities on the side, Swedenborg was now fully absorbed by his project of an extensive soul-body follow up to *De Infinito*, which he hoped to publish in Sweden and which was provisionally entitled *De Anima et ejus cum Corpore Commercio* (*On the soul and of its interaction with the body*). This however never appeared, a fact that points to the way his personal family conflict with the head censor of Sweden delayed his next soul-body publication for six years. His now-lost manuscript was probably ready for editorial review by spring 1735, and was based on his

[7] Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 468-9.
[8] Bergquist, *Diary*, pp. 65, 97-8.
[9] ES, §5799.
[10] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 391.

unpublished *De Mechanismo Animae et Corporis* (1733), which included materials drawn from comparative research on Wolff's *Psychologica Empirica*, along with various anatomical observations on the brain and generation organs drawn from Descartes, Leibniz, and anatomists Thomas Willis, Martin Schurig and Christian Friedrich Richtern. The manuscript's existence is mostly known through the minutes of the Board of Censors in Stockholm from 21 April 1735, which recorded that Swedenborg had presented a copy of an 'extensive work' entitled *De Anima et ejus cum Corpore Commercio* for authorization of publication.[11]

The Board of Censors oversaw the preliminary approval of every publication in Sweden and ensured that works set for print did not offend 'religion, the State or good morals'. It was led by a *censor librorum*, himself a member of the Royal Chancery.[12] In 1760, the Board would become the organ responsible for formally breaking Swedenborg's anonymity as a theologian and seer.[13] The head *censor librorum* from 1716 until 1737 was ex-fellow *Collegium Curiosorum* member and Skyttean professor of eloquence at Uppsala Johan Upmarck Rosenadler (1664-1743), who was also a member of Swedenborg's extended family, and Swedenborg developed a personal enmity towards him.[14] In 1714, Rosenadler had married Swedenborg's cousin Eva Schwede, thus becoming Swedenborg's cousin-by-marriage. From 1720 to 1728, Swedenborg was involved in a long inheritance dispute with Eva's mother Brita Behm (1670-1755), who was personally defended by Rosenadler (an interested party as future inheritor).[15] The dispute, related to mining properties, was eventually settled privately in 1728, yet lasted for years in court, with numerous appeals found in favour of Brita Behm, straining

[11] For the 1735 manuscript, see Codex 88, p. 117. On Schurig, see 147, 149, 152. On brain, see .e.g. 156-157. For discussion of Descartes arguments, including *cogito ergo sum*, see p. 160.
[12] Ryder, I, p. 401.
[13] In 1760, the Board approved the diffusion of *De Coelo et de Inferno* in Sweden while insisting that Swedenborg disclosed the names of all the recipients of his work See Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 528-9.
[14] *SBL*, 'Johan Rosenadler'.
[15] See Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 101. See also Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 266, p. 410.

Swedenborg's relationship with his aunt, Rosenadler and other members of his family.[16] In his later manuscripts of *experientiae spirituales*, he described Johan Rosenadler as a 'self-deceived spirit' confused by his own eloquently skillful lies, completely prevented in the spiritual world from distinguishing truths from falsities.[17]

In the tense confessional context of the time, Rosenadler was considered a moderate *censor librorum* and a 'reasonable man' by most Swedish Pietists.[18] Still, in 1735 his personal opposition to Swedenborg led the latter's manuscript to be held in limbo, on the grounds that it reportedly contained 'profound physiological views on this difficult subject [the interaction of soul and body], different from the sentiment of other writers', thus requiring 'more time' to be examined. Rosenadler's verdict was at odds with the usual practice of censors to not pronounce on matters of anatomy nor natural philosophy.[19] Rosenadler's verdict also reads as prejudiced when compared with Swedenborg's other publications at the time: as shown in the first chapter, Swedenborg's ideas about the soul during the period largely conformed to Cartesian lines dominant in Sweden and were not, mutatis mutandis, different from most other writers. They could hardly be dismissed on religious grounds either: by 1735, Swedenborg had written almost nothing on theology, and the religious considerations in *De Infinito* were all concerned with the reconciliation of natural philosophy with faith in God, views which could hardly meet with rebuttal on either moral or theological grounds, especially from a censor reputed for his moderation.[20] Following Rosenadler's comments, the publication of *De Anima et ejus cum Corpore Commercio* stalled in the Board of Censors, and Swedenborg

[16] See Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 410-1 and 430.
[17] ES, §5700.
[18] *SBL*, 'Johan Rosenadler'.
[19] Ryder, I, p. 401.
[20] Schuchard, *Secret Agent*, p. 217 suggested the work was rejected for religious reasons, which seems very unlikely.

eventually scrapped his manuscript in the summer of 1735, following an event which drastically modified his working plans.

c) The funeral of a 'godless Pietist': death of Jesper Swedberg (July 1735), Swedish persecution of Pietism and changes in financial situation

Three months after the censors' meeting put *De Anima et ejus cum Corpore Commercio* in limbo, Swedenborg's father Jesper died, on 26 July 1735 at the age of eighty-two.[21] However, he was only buried six months later at Varnhem on 29 January 1736, the day of Swedenborg's forty-eighth birthday.[22] Such a long delay was unusual and reflected the tensions surrounding the burial of a prominent Pietist advocate in a context of increased repression of Pietism in Sweden.[23] Jesper was indeed not only known for his fierce criticisms of the church and of its high-ranking dignitaries, but also for his lifelong Pietistic sympathies, illustrated by his own Psalm book which had been indexed for its excessively Pietistic character.[24] Swedish religious orthodoxy chose to send a strong message to Jesper's followers by appointing the anti-Pietist pastor Jacob Benzelius (1683-1747) to officiate at the delayed ceremony. Jacob was the bishop of Gothenburg and younger brother of Eric Benzelius. Despite his rather tenuous family ties to the deceased, Jacob was chosen for his position as a vocal and relentless opponent of the 'Pietists godless doctrines' which he had fought with his 1734 religious decree in the House of Clergy, which allowed prosecution of holders of such beliefs.[25] In a direct allusion to Jesper's sympathies in his eulogy, Jacob Benzelius warned against those who supported salvation through good deeds, against the true Lutheran doctrine of *sola fide*.[26] As seen in the first chapter, the sermon must have resonated bitterly with Swedenborg's

[21] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 476.
[22] Acton wrongly asserted that long delays for dignitaries between burial and death was not uncommon, but this seems inaccurate, Acton, *Letters*, I, p.476. See Bergquist, *Secret*, pp. 125, 128.
[23] Bergquist, *Secret*, pp. 125, 128.
[24] *SBL*, 'Jesper Swedberg'.
[25] Bergquist, *Secret*, pp. 125, 128.
[26] Bergquist, *Secret*, pp. 125, 128.

growing Pietistic convictions. Jacob's sermon also illustrates the sharp divide within Swedenborg's family between 'rationalist' Pietists such as himself and his late father, and dogmatic orthodox Lutherans such as Benzelius and his brother Eric. This divide would pass on to the next generation, when Swedenborg's nephew Filenius, Eric's successor as bishop of Linköping, would later lead the heresy trial against Swedenborg's disciples in 1769.

At the time of Jesper's death, Swedenborg had four surviving siblings: his older sister Anna (born 1686) married to Eric Benzelius, and three younger adult siblings: Catharina (1693), married to Linköping pastor Jonas Unge (1681-1755), Jesper junior (1694) and Margaretha (1695).[27] As the eldest surviving son, Emanuel became, at forty-seven, the head of the Swedenborg family, a change of status which also came with new financial autonomy. The inheritance he received at the death of his father amounted to 5,000 riksdaler, a sum equivalent to 1.5 times his annual salary of 3,600 riksdaler at the Board of Mines.[28] Although Swedenborg had not received any salary from the Bureau of Mines from 1718 to 1724, and then only half of a salary from 1724 to 1730, his private financial assets had also increased significantly during the last decade. Through the 1720s Swedenborg had received, like his four other siblings, 6,500 riksdaler from a trust established at the death of their mother, Sara Behm (d.1696).[29] He had also inherited from his mother a mining property of considerable value, and around 30,000 riksdalers from his maternal uncle Albrecht de Behm (d.1700) the late spouse of his hated aunt Brita. [30] At the death of his stepmother Sara Bergia (d.1720) Swedenborg further inherited about 18,000 riksdaler from iron mining shares in Starbo, Marnäs and Prästhyttan in the province of Dalarna. From 1720 to 1735, he concluded estate

[27] *Dufty Documents, Doc. 2.*
[28] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 354. When Swedenborg became an ordinary assessor in 1724, his annual salary was of 2,400 riksdalers. It was raised to the full salary of 3,600 riksdaler a year in 1730. See Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 101.
[29] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 101.
[30] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 101, 354. See also Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 266-7.

transactions with the wealthy Gyllenborg family, including the partial sale of his mother's valuable mining property to Frederik Gyllenborg (1698-1759), Carl Gyllenborg's brother, for 45,000 riksdaler.[31] It was later rumoured by his friends that Swedenborg had confessed to falling in love with Fredrik's wife, the pious Swedish writer Elizabeth Stierncrona (1714-1769) whom he later expected to marry in the spiritual world.[32]

The sale of his mother's property allowed Swedenborg to pay for the expensive publication of the three richly-engraved volumes of his *Principia Rerum Naturalium*. During the 1720s and 1730s, Swedenborg also received income from his mining properties and iron sales, credited in Dutch guilders and placed on foreign accounts in the United Provinces, safe from the fluctuations of the Swedish currency and easily available during his travels.[33] Swedenborg had bankers in Stockholm, Amsterdam, London and Paris, all of whom were either Swedes or regularly involved in Swedish business ventures, to which he had been privy since his tenure on the Swedish committee for finances and foreign trade in 1723.

In Stockholm, Swedenborg's accounts were handled by the Swedish merchant Peter Hultman and the bankers Anthoni IV Grill (1705-1783) and Claes Grill (1705-1767, KVA member in 1740) from the famous Swedish Grill family. The Grills specialised in metal trade and were involved both in the Dutch East India Company and in the smaller-scale Swedish East India Company established in 1731.[34] In Amsterdam, Swedenborg's first banker was the Swedish merchant Zacharias Strömberg (1722) who helped him gather the funds to buy iron-mining shares in Sweden, and the Swedish consul in

[31] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 354.
[32] S. Toksvig, *Swedenborg scientist and mystic*, (West Chester, 1983) p. 78.
[33]Bergquist, *Secret*, pp. 354-5. See also Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 278-9.
[34] Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 765-7. See also C. Gill, 'The Affair of Porto Novo: An Incident in Anglo-Swedish Relations', *The English Historical Review*, 73(286) Jan. (1958), pp. 47-65.

Holland, wine merchant Pierre Balgerie (1679-1759).[35] In England, his banker and business agent was the Swede Carl Lindgren (1685-1775), who continued to work for him until his death in London in 1772.[36] Finally, in Paris, Swedenborg designated as 'my bankers' the Lutheran banker of Louis XV Christoph Johan Baur (1699-1770) and his associate François Fleury Tourton both based in the Place des Victoires near the Louvre, and the bankers Lavalle & David, who dealt in 'fancy ware and porcelain' in the rue St. Honoré.[37]

Following the inheritance, Swedenborg found himself in a position to plan a new extended leave of absence for the year 1736 where he could fully devote himself to his soul-body research. A new leave of absence required him to give up part of his salary to fund a substitute to carry his responsibilities in the Bureau of Mines, a condition which could now be fulfilled with further financial comfort. Swedenborg's relative wealth at the time even allowed him to extend a 6% interest loan of 2,000 riksdaler to his cousin Peter Schönström on 30 April 1736, just two months before leaving for Paris on 10 July 1736.[38] His new leave was meant to provide him with the anatomical training needed to produce empirical demonstration of the immortality of the soul, and harnessing its powers to restore the long-lost Adamic bodily coordination.[39]

d) Opposition to (and reasons for) Swedenborg's anatomical leave (1735-1739)

In the months following Jesper's death, Swedenborg notified his family about his intention to leave for France, the Italian peninsula and the United Provinces. Some of his relatives expressed dissatisfaction at his project, such as his brother-in-law Jonas Unge,

[35] Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 278-9.
[36] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 766.
[37] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 94. On Tourton and Baur, see P. Chevallier, *les ducs sous l'acacia ou les premiers pas de la franc-maçonnerie française 1725-1743* (Paris, 1964) p. 73.
[38] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 478.
[39] *De Infinito*, p. 230.

and his first application for leave was rejected.[40] Nevertheless, on 24 May 1736 Swedenborg made a second successful application to king Frederick I, in which he avoided any mention either of anatomy or of the soul, insisting instead that he merely wished to pursue a work he had 'promised to achieve' during his preceding leave of absence, and which was only at its beginning.[41] Such a description could only have referred to his planned major work on the soul to come, announced in his *De Infinito* (1734).[42] Nevertheless, in his application Swedenborg only gave details about his work on metals, also published in 1734 and via the same publisher in Leipzig.[43] Counting on Frederik's fascination for alchemical research along with the favourable reviews of his works on iron and copper, it seems that he obtained a leave to pursue his mineralogical work while effectively intending to retrain as an anatomist, a trick which led to the overruling of his previously-denied application and the granting of a successful new leave of absence.[44]

Swedenborg's conjectures in his *De Mechanismo Animae et Corporis* (1733) manuscript were speculative, and little corroborative evidence existed for his 'subtle membranes' in the anatomical authorities quoted in his drafts since 1719. Even more problematic was his lack of first-hand anatomical knowledge of the human brain, and it was obvious that any serious update of the Cartesian model could hardly be deemed convincing by resting solely on inference-based comparisons drawn from other authors. Swedenborg not only needed to deepen his knowledge of cerebral anatomy, but he also had to build up his anatomist persona with appropriate credentials in practical dissection and anatomical study. Overall, his extended leave of absence to study anatomy in France and Venice,

[40] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 477.
[41] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 478.
[42] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 478.
[43] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 478.
[44] For references to the reception of Swedenborg's *Opera Mineralia et Philosophica*, see Ryder I, p. 371.

with a final step in Amsterdam to publish the results, eventually lasted four years. It would be the longest leave of his career at the Bureau of Mines.

II. Travelling and anatomical studies

1) Anatomical studies and dissection in France and Italy (1736-1738)

a) Travelling to Copenhagen, Amsterdam and Paris (Summer 1736): vexed by Wolff and praise for the Dutch Republic (and the avaricious dutchmen)

Having obtained formal approval from the king, in early July 1736, Swedenborg's application for a leave of absence was forwarded to the Bureau of Mines for an 'expression of opinion'.[45] Swedenborg offered to give up half of his salary during his absence, and not to reclaim it until a vacant assessorship arose in the college.[46] Once the Board approved his proposal, the part-time assessor left Stockholm for France on 10 July. He traveled via Copenhagen, Flensburg, Hamburg, Amsterdam, Antwerp and Brussels, before arriving in Paris on Friday on 3 September 1736, after fifty-five days of travel.

In Copenhagen, Swedenborg found a copy of Christian Wolff's *Theologia Naturalis* and bitterly deplored the fact that Wolff seemed to refer to his ideas without acknowledging him, not quoting him a single time across his thousand-pages long work.[47] Swedenborg must have expected Wolff to mention his *De Infinito*, following his (non-extant) correspondence with the philosopher from Breslau.[48] Despite his disappointment, Wolff's ideas on the soul continued to exert a major influence on Swedenborg's soul-body research through the 1740s. In his philosophical notebook from 1741-1744, Wolff's *Psychologia Rationalis* even became of one of the most quoted works (with almost two hundred references), alongside various extracts from Leibniz, Descartes, Malebranche,

[45] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 478.
[46] The vacancy happened in 1744 when assessor Valerius died. Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 480.
[47] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 78.
[48] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 767.

Bilfinger, Aristotle and Plato.[49] As we will see, after Wolff's death in 1754, Swedenborg would eventually turn his back on his former idol, dismissing him as a materialist and syllogistic spirit, incapable of speaking of spiritual things, an impious proponent of a natural theology that had become a dangerously delusional 'substitute' to revelation.[50]

In Holland Swedenborg visited his new Amsterdam banker George Clifford III (1685-1760) and Thomas Hope (1704-1779), head of the Hope brothers and the Hope & Co bank.[51] Clifford, a director of the Dutch East India Company, also served as a patron for Swedenborg's cousin Carl Linnaeus and funded the latter's *Hortus Cliffortianus* (1737). In Amsterdam, Swedenborg started to synthesise notes and laid the first grounds for his new anatomical work centered on the human soul. [52] Living for four days close to the Amsterdam's Exchange, Swedenborg recorded with disdain that 'the whole town breathed nothing but lucre'.[53]

In his later *experientiae spirituales*, Swedenborg associated the Dutch spirits with obsessive trade, love of money and religious tolerance.[54] The United Provinces were a major centre for commerce in the eighteenth century, and in Rotterdam, Swedenborg attributed the country's prosperity to its republican government, in a strong criticism of what he denounced as the smothering and sinful flaws inherent to absolute monarchy.[55] Exalted after a self-induced '*deliquium'* (viz. a momentary 'fading of consciousness' which clarified his mind) Swedenborg recorded in his travel journal that 'the equality between men' enforced by the Dutch republic led them to an acknowledgement of the

[49] *Notebook*, pp. 522-35.
[50] On natural theology, see AC, §8944. On Wolff, see TE, §38.
[51] See Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 85 and Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 766.
[52] Bergquist, *Diary*, §282 and Lamm, *Development*, p. 62.
[53] '*Tota civitas nihil nisi lucrum spirabat*', Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 85.
[54] UJ(P) §13, §21, §23.
[55] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 85. For latter criticisms of Swedenborg against absolute monarchy, see also Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 563-4.

divine as the 'only true Lord', which in turn 'blessed' the country with riches.[56] In other words, the wealth of the Dutch was a providential reward for their religious tolerance, which itself arose from their republican form of government. Wealth however, never came free, and Swedenborg often deplored the sin of greed which in his eyes, consumed part of the Dutch population.[57] Such views at the time reflected his endorsement of the parliamentary dominance in Swedish politics which until now kept in check his home-country from engaging into conflicts similar to the disastrous Carolinian campaigns. As we will see later, this first mention of a '*deliquium*' also points to a new self-experimental practice used by Swedenborg to clarify his mind, based on breath-holding while thinking.

Similar to his travels from the 1720s, Swedenborg recorded miscellaneous details during his journey, ranging from the characteristics of towns, machines used, fortifications, castles, and libraries to representations in theatres and operas, persons met and places visited, along with the churches and rites of local populations. Despite his religious curiosity in habits of worship, Swedenborg remained bitterly contemptuous of the wealth of Catholic clergy and monastic orders, echoing his own late father's travel records during his youth. Arriving in Paris via Valenciennes, Cambrai and Pont-Sainte-Maxence, Swedenborg expressed typically Lutheran bursts of Catholic anti-clericalism, despising the 'fat, lazy and useless' Franciscan monks who 'give nothing to the poor except words and blessings, and on the other hand, insist on having everything from the indigent for nothing'.[58]

[56] For reference to Swedenborg's *deliquium*, see Bergquist, *Diary*, §282. For a commentary of this event, see Lamm, *Development*, p. 62.
[57] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 86.
[58] Tafel, *Documents*, II, pp. 90-1.

b) A year and a half in Paris: tourism, anatomical studies and a gap in records (September 1736-March 1738)

More than twenty years had passed since Swedenborg's last visit to Paris during his Grand Tour in 1713. After his arrival in the French capital, Swedenborg took lodgings for one month at the Hôtel de Hamburg, a major establishment for foreign dignitaries, merchants, scholars and officers, where he recorded starting to write his first 'transaction' on the brain on 6 September 1736.[59] Five days later, he renewed contact with Peter Niklas von Gedda, who was now Swedish ambassador in the French capital.[60] Swedenborg also met with the Swedish general Johan Stenflycht (1682-1758), a Carolinian officer, general of ex-king Stanislaus of Poland (Louis XV's father-in-law), and since 1735 and the French exile of Stanislaus, lieutenant general in the French army.[61] Swedenborg had a cordial relationship with Stenflycht dating back to their mutual acquaintance with Charles XII during the lasts campaigns of the Great Northern War. Stenflycht and Swedenborg must also have been both aware of the role of Swedenborg's Parisian bankers Christoph J. Baur and F. Tourton, tasked by André-Hercule de Fleury with carrying military funds for the Polish Army of Stanislaus during the siege of Dantzig in 1733.[62]

Swedenborg was inspired artistically and philosophically by his first months in the French capital. Visiting Paris extensively, he praised Parisian theatre for having reached an all-time apex, and went to the opera twice, seeing the first French *opéra-ballet*, *L'Europe Galante* of French composer André Campra (1660-1744), and the inaugural representation of *Les Génies* by French composer Mademoiselle Duval (1718-1775), the first opera written by a woman to be performed in Paris during the eighteenth century.

[59] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 91.
[60] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 92.
[61] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 92.
[62] Chevallier, *Ducs sous l'acacia*, p. 73.

During his promenades along the Seine and the Jardin des Tuileries, Swedenborg recorded how the pleasant walks along magnificent palaces made him speculate 'on the forms of the particles in the atmosphere'.[63] His interest in churches and holy relics was satisfied as well.[64] He visited Notre Dame and the Sainte Chapelle, where he admired the nails of the holy cross and the crown of thorns, bought at great costs from the Eastern Roman Empire by French kings. He praised the church of St. Geneviève for its beauty and visited the grave of Descartes.[65] In the 'splendid building' of the Sorbonne, Swedenborg witnessed theological disputations which he described as 'carried pretty well', but also deplored the unsustainable wealth and extensive estate of French religious orders, something which he predicted would prove untenable during the following decades.[66] On 3 November, Swedenborg witnessed the opening of the parliament in the Palais de Justice, on the Île de la Cité.[67]After this event, only two records were referenced in his travel journal for seventeen months, from November 1736 to March 1738. In January 1737, Swedenborg recorded extensive information about French and English royalty and French provinces and religious-owned estates, while in July 1737, he made a visit to the lime-sulphate and ferrous-salted 'vitriolic' Parisian springs of Auteuil-Passy, which echoed his own interest about vitriols in Sweden.[68]

During this blank period, it has also been speculated -- based on Swedenborg's list of acquaintances in Paris, his financial records and later diaries of spiritual experiences referring to meeting Louis XV -- that he established contacts which later helped him secure a secret French pension to fund the publication of his soul-body and/or theological works, perhaps through the Stanislaus connections of Stenflycht or his Parisian banker

[63] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 94.
[64] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 101.
[65] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 97.
[66] Tafel, *Documents*, II, pp. 98, 94, 96.
[67] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 97.
[68] Tafel, *Documents*, II, pp. 98-102.

Baur.[69] Discreet political networks played an important role in French policy towards Sweden at the time, particularly through Louis XV's personal diplomatic network of agents 'Le Secret du Roy', which distributed subsidies to Swedish parliamentarians as a means to keep Swedish policy aligned with French interests. Swedenborg's financial records indicate that he started to benefit from French diplomatic subsidies for Hat parliamentarians in 1746, which led scholars to speculate that earlier contact might have been established with members of Louis XV's close circle during Swedenborg's last visit in Paris.[70] According to F.G. Lindh who produced extensive analyses of Swedenborg's banking records, he might even have started to receive a French pension as soon as 1738 via his Amsterdam account, to fund his first anatomical publications.[71] However, no hard evidence can account for such early transfers, nor for any personal audience with the king or the queen. [72]

On 2 October 1737, Swedenborg moved to the former Rue de l'Observatoire, situated close to the Académie Royale de Chirurgie (1731-1793).[73] The Académie was established in 1731 by Louis XV and occupied the anatomy theatre Rue des Cordeliers previously built in the 1690s for the Confrérie de Saint-Côme et de Saint Damien. The Confrérie was the first college of surgery in France, founded under Louis IX to distinguish between the peer-examined and trained *chirurgiens de robe longue* from the *chirurgiens-barbiers de robe courte*. In 1738 the Académie Royale de Chirurgie was directed by the famous anatomist Jean Louis Petit (1674-1750).[74] Anatomical demonstrations took place in the theatre, while anatomists and surgeons would give private lessons and commonly accept foreigners as students.

[69] Bergquist, *Secret*, pp. 362-5, Bergquist, *Diary*, §274-5, pp. 310-1.
[70] Bergquist, *Secret*, pp. 353-66.
[71] Bergquist, *Secret*, pp. 362-5 and Lindh, *Ekonomi*. Sept. Oct. (1929) pp. 87-8.
[72] Bergquist, *Secret*, pp. 356-7.
[73] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 94.
[74] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 477.

During this period we find the first references to Swedenborg's own dissections in his manuscripts, but also evidence of possible exchanges and lessons under another doctor Petit: François Pourfour du Petit (1664-1741).[75] Like his homonym (with whom he had no links) Pourfour du Petit was also a member of the Académie Royale de Chirurgie and a specialist of the eye, famous for his work *Lettres d'un medecin des hôpitaux du Roy* (1710) which described the pyramidal beam (*corpora pyramidalia*) among wider observations on the consequences of brain wounds on the mobility of soldiers, an interest which chimed with Swedenborg's concern with the coordination between soul and body.[76] This praised work had become exceedingly rare as a result of a low print-run.[77] Swedenborg's quotations from this work in §1023 of his own observations on the *corpora pyramidalia* indicate that he accessed the book, probably via du Petit himself, who also might have provided him with private lessons for his dissections of the brain, the heart, and various animals.[78] Another possible anatomy instructor for Swedenborg was the Danish-born anatomist Jacob Benignus Winsløw (1669-1760), demonstrator of anatomy and surgery at the Jardin du Roy, with whom Swedenborg could have conversed easily. Apart from his own dissections, Swedenborg copied notes about brain anatomy from a series of well-known anatomical works on the brain, from March 1736 until March 1739.[79] These notes were used to write his manuscript *Transactionum de Cerebro*, before moving to Venice, where he also might have benefitted from access to dissection while putting his notes in order.

[75] Acton confused Jean-Louis Petit and François Pourfour du Petit, when he stated (incorrectly) that the latter was the director of the French School of Surgery (*De Cerebro*, xix and p. 617, note 7).
[76] L. Kruger and L. W. Swanson, '1710: The Introduction of Experimental Nervous System Physiology and Anatomy by François Pourfour du Petit' in L. Kruger and L. W. Swanson (eds.), *Brain, Mind and Medicine: Essays in Eighteenth-Century Neuroscience*, (Dordrecht, 2007), pp. 99-113.
[77] *De Cerebro*, xix
[78] For evidence of Swedenborg's own practice of dissections, see *OERA*, §340, II, p. 331 and §401.
[79] See Codex 88, and Ryder, I, p. 403.

c) Travel across the Italian peninsula: theatre, celebrations, brothels and completing the anatomical work in Venice (April-August 1738)

After leaving Paris, Swedenborg traveled to Venice via Lyon, then recorded crossing the Alps via Mont Cenis in Savoy on 22 March 1738, with twelve people and six Carmelite monks, in a caravan which amounted from fifty to sixty people, with carriers and mules having to 'swim into the snow'. On 9 April 1738 Swedenborg described his visit to the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan which left him deeply unimpressed, seeing mere 'old monk books' and 'old books of little value'. Swedenborg left on 13 April 1738 and took coaches to Bergamo, Brescia, Peschiera del Garda on the shore of Lake Garda, and then Padua via Verona, where he praised the quality of Italian opera, which made French singing and dancing look like 'mere child play'.[80] Swedenborg eventually entered the city of Venice by boat on the Brenta River. He made a clear distinction between entering the mainland territory and cities belonging to the Republic of Venice (Vicenza, Padua etc.), and the city of Venice itself in the lagoon, a distinction of importance when analyzing his travel notes and anatomical work in the city.

From April to August 1738, he stayed in Venice, where he attended various celebrations and leisure events before finishing his extensive unpublished manuscript about the brain in three parts, *Transactionum de Cerebro* (1738). Apart from tourism and sight-seeing, he left few notes about his four-months stay, which led to speculations amongst scholars as to how much work he really did in a city renowned for its endless parties, while the nearby Padua, which Swedenborg only passed by briefly, had been a centre for anatomical studies for centuries. In Venice, there were indeed many cafes, celebrations, churches, theatres and even gambling places owned by venetian aristocrats. The most famous of them, the 'Ridotto' on the Rialto bridge founded in 1638, was public and

[80] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 109.

considered the first gambling house in early modern Europe.[81] We know that Swedenborg passed by the Ridotto during the celebrations of the Ascension on 15 May 1738 in the company of 'Herr Firncranz', one of the merchants from the German shop Firncranz & Mayr in Venice, which specialised in exotic spices such as cinchona and the sale of muslin fabric, brought back from the Nawab of Benghal by the British, French and Dutch East Indian Companies.[82] The presence of East Indian trading actors around Swedenborg intersected with his networks in Paris, as 'Herr Firncranz' was a relative of Ulm merchant André Firencrantz, the father-in-law of Swedenborg's Parisian banker Christoph J. Baur.[83]

Swedenborg also later recorded Venetian brothels, famously described by Voltaire and Casanova, as an evil 'tolerated' in 'populous cities' such as 'London, Amsterdam, Paris, Vienna, Venice, Naples, and Rome', for men whose 'love of sex' cannot be 'restrained without harm'.[84] In Venice the price of prostitutes usually ranged between four days of a medium salary to four months of a surgeon's pay.[85] Swedenborg exhibited knowledge of some popular categories of Venetian prostitutes, such as the '*meretrice, ruffiana, puttana, prostitute al bordello, cortigiane and concubine*', with Latin versions of those terms even making their ways into his controversial treatise on venereal and marriage love *De Amore Conjugiali* (1768).[86] Although Swedenborg remained a bachelor since a broken engagement in 1716 with Emerentia Polhem (Christopher's Polhem's daughter) a popular yet disputed account from his Danish friend Tuxen claimed that Swedenborg confessed to

[81] F. Lane, *Storia di Venezia* (Torino, 1978) p. 504.
[82] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 110. For reference to Firncranz & Mayr as merchants in Venice, see Chur, Staatsarchiv Graubünden: *Wirtschaftsarchiv Salis-Massner, Bank und Speditionshaus*, 1727-1797 StAGR CB II 1360 d 13: *inhalt* and p. 130. For reference to their spice-selling activities of quinquina, see F. Asti, *Memoria o dissertazione…* (Venice, 1791), p. 81. For their activities as fabric sellers and buyers of muslin, see *Schriftenreihe des Staatsarchivs, 10* (Dresden, 1977), p. 352.
[83] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 110. For reference to André Firencrantz as Baur's father-in-law, see Chevallier, *Ducs sous l'Acacia*, p. 73.
[84] AM, §451.
[85] A. Barzhaghi, *Donne o cortigiane ? la prostituzione a Venezia documenti di costume dal XVI al XVIII secolo*. (Verona, 1980) p. 167.
[86] On the categories of prostitutes in Venice, see Barzaghi, *Prostituzione*, p.167. For references to the terminology of prostitution in *De Amore Conjugiali*, see *meretrice* §79, *concubine*, *pellicatum*, §462.

him having had a mistress in Italy.[87] Swedenborg also recorded in his early private spiritual notes that 'inclination towards women' had been the 'chief passion' of his life until 1744, while two pages of his Italian travels recording erotic dreams were destroyed by Swedenborg's heirs in 1772.[88] Nevertheless, one must refrain from interpreting such passages too univocally, since as we will see in the next chapter, women in Swedenborg's *experientiae spirituales* often stood for desirable personifications of his soul-body research.[89] Still, it is not unlikely that a travelling aristocrat and wealthy bachelor like Swedenborg would visit brothels during his journeys, especially considering the extent to which he dealt with the subject from a practical, doctrinal and moral perspective in his theology.[90]

Nevertheless, in direct relation to his soul-body work, the last Venetian note of his travel diary mentioned that Swedenborg left Venice after having 'completed his work there'.[91] As discussed above, scholarship has been divided on such a statement due to the long-held misconception that the old city of Venice was an anatomical no-man's land in the shadow of the near-by University of Padua.[92] However, this paradox mainly arose from a scholarly misconception. Since the fourteenth century the city actually had two medical colleges known as Collegio dei Medici-Fisici ('College of doctor-physicians') and Collegio dei Medici-Chirughi ('College of the doctor-surgeons'), both of which were thriving in the year 1738.[93] For decades, the declining University of Padua had seen a

[87] Tafel, *Documents*, I, pp. 628-30.
[88] Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 91, §14. For reference to the removed pages, see Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 130; Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 156.
[89] See e.g Bergquist, *Diary*, pp. 323-4, §287.
[90] See sections on taking a mistress and 'scortatory love' in AM, §79 and §426-77.
[91] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 110.
[92] For such erroneous statements, see e.g. Schuchard, *Secret Agent*, p. 260.
[93] See V. Giormani, 'Contrasti tra l'Università di Padova e il Collegio dei medici di Venezia nel '700', *QSUP*, 28 (1995); F. Bernardi, *Prospetto storico-critico dell'origine, facoltà, diversi stati, progressi e vicende del Collegio medico-chirurgico, e dell'arte chirurgica in Venezia* (Venezia, 1797).

rising local rivalry with the more liberal, lower-scale medical colleges of Venice in terms of enrolments and graduations for the practice of medicine, anatomy and surgery.

Archives of the College dei Medici Chirurghi in San Giacomo dell'Orio show how an educated, wealthy and noble *forèsto* ('foreign visitor') fluent in Latin like Swedenborg could easily have accessed the theatre and dissection tables without need for formal registration, regardless of his religious denomination.[94] Swedenborg could have witnessed dissections, exchanged with doctors there, taken private lessons at the anatomical theatre and accessed relevant anatomical literature to complete his notes from his Paris studies. Such activity seems partly corroborated by references to Venetian literature in his manuscript, such as the *Considerazioni ed Esperienza intorno al Creduto Cervello Impietrito* (1710) from Antonio Vallisnieri.[95]

Overall, Swedenborg's work in Venice was likely concerned with putting the last touches to his anatomical work, while enjoying some well-deserved leisure. Having done so, he traveled to Rome and then to Amsterdam via Paris, in order to publish what would become his first major publication on the soul, *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* (1740).

2) The soul dissected: from *De Cerebro* to *Oeconomia Regni Animalis*

a) A new government in Sweden; stay in Rome (September 1738-February 1739) and travel to Amsterdam

After Swedenborg left Venice, he went to Padua, Bologna, Florence, Pisa and Siena. He stayed in Rome for five months, from 25 September 1738 until 15 February 1739. During his time in Rome Swedenborg visited the city extensively, re-enacting the same itinerary as the Catholic triumph of Christina in 1655, from the North of the city via the Via Flaminia and then through the Porta del Popolo. In January and February 1739 he

[94] In the archives of the Collegio dei fisici chirurghi of 1738 (Venice, Ms It. VII 2338 (=9672) there are between four to eight people who graduated in July-August 1738, including an obvious foreigner named Joseph Botley.
[95] *De Cerebro*, §680 p. 387.

composed a series of three short manuscripts, entitled *De Musculis in genere* about the nature of muscles, the theological manuscript *De Fide et bonis operibus* and a short introduction to his brain manuscript, *De Via ad cognitionem animae*.[96] This last work consisted of a four-page introduction to the *De Cerebro* manuscript, underlining the importance of universal analogy across nature (*Cum enim tota in minimis existat natura*, 'Nature exists in totality in its most minimal') drawn from Malpighi's *De Bombyce* (1667) or treatise on the silkworm.[97] The manuscript pointed again to the need for Swedenborg's elusive mathematical philosophy of universals.[98]

This period was also rich in events for Swedish politics. In a reference pointing to his awareness of the political tensions at the time, Swedenborg noted in his journal that he 'saw the palace where the Pretender lives, which is almost opposite to that occupied by the French embassy' (5 October 1738) thus noting the open collusion in Rome between French interests and the Jacobite cause supporting James Francis Edward Stuart.[99] In Rome on 2 February 1739, Swedenborg was received by Swedish ambassador and catholic convert Nils Bielke (1706-1765) who had been naturalised French in 1733.[100] Bielke informed Swedenborg of political changes about to take place in Sweden and initiated by France: the Secret Committee of the *Riksdag* presided by Arvid Horn had concluded an alliance with France on 10 November 1738, effectively disavowing Horn's policy of neutrality and triggering his resignation after nearly two decades of dominance.

A letter sent by Swedenborg's brother-in-law, assessor Lars Benzelstierna (also a member of the Secret Committee) indicates that he knew a change of ministry led by his long-time ally Gyllenborg was about to take place, yet he did not know who would

[96] Ryder, I, pp. 420, 421 and 425.
[97] Stroh, *Treatises*, §2-3, p. 159. See also Acton's preface in *De Cerebro*.
[98] Stroh, *Treatises*, §4, p. 161
[99] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 122.
[100] *SBL*, 'Niels Bielke'

replace the Cap figures, whom Lars listed for him in his answer.[101] Benzelstierna, also shared news directly related to Swedenborg's situation in the *Bergscollegium*. The experienced president Conrad Ribbing (1671-1736) had died during Swedenborg's first travel to France in 1736 and was succeeded by his brother-in-law, the numismatist Gustaf Rålamb (1675-1750), a pious, influent and incompetent man described as lacking in skills and understanding, who would preside the *Bergscollegium* until Swedenborg's retirement.[102]

Regarding politics, Lars also informed Swedenborg that the five Cap ruling councilors of the *Rikets Råd*, the governing Privy Council of Sweden, had all been replaced by Hat members. Horn himself had been replaced by Swedenborg's old ally Carl Gyllenborg and was granted retirement at 74 in December 1738. The five leading councillors from the Cap party, which included Gustaf Bonde (ex-president of the *Bergscollegium*) and Carl Gustaf Bielke (1683-1754, cousin of ambassador Nils Bielke) were also forced to resign and similarly granted retirement.[103] Lars informed Swedenborg they were replaced by Hat members, among them Olof Carlsson Cederström (1679-1745), whom Swedenborg had met in Hamburg at the beginning of his leave on 01 August 1736.[104] Furthermore, five more positions were filled in the privy council by Hat members, among them Charles Gustav Sparre (1688-1741), Gyllenborg's brother-in-law and co-plotter of the failed Swedish-Jacobite invasion of Scotland of 1716.[105] In England, Sparre and Gyllenborg had married the pro-Stuart sisters Sara and Elizabeth Derith, providing further context behind the renewed support of Gyllenborg's new government for the exiled house of Stuart in Great Britain against George II of Hanover (1683-1760). Finally, another of

[101] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 482. In his reply, Lars Benzelstierna wrote to Swedenborg that the latter had 'good reason to think that there has been some changes here at home since his departure'.
[102] *SBL*, 'Rålamb'.
[103] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 482
[104] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 82.
[105] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 482. See also 'Baron Sparre, Swedish diplomat to England 1688-1741', *The Twickenham Museum*.

Swedenborg's old London acquaintances, the Swedish ambassador to France Peter Niklas Von Gedda (1675-1758) had just been promoted as Court Chancellor.[106]

The Hat takeover of 1738 was supported by France and particularly by the subsidies sent through the Secret du Roy. In French reports about Sweden at the time, the Hat party was referred to as '*les Patriotes*', hinting at both their nationalistic agenda for Sweden and their friendly positioning towards France.[107] More broadly, French influence over Swedish politics was part of a wider prospective scheme of alliances with Poland, Prussia, Denmark and the Ottoman Empire against Britain and Russia.[108] The neutrality and devolution of powers between the four houses of the *Riksdag* under the rule of Horn, praised by Swedenborg, had facilitated foreign influence and the flourishment of the 'French system'.[109] The Swedish distribution of French funds was at that time managed by a number of Hat members via Jean Bedoire (d.1753), a French agent of Louis XV in Sweden.[110] Evidence suggests that until his death in 1743, Eric Benzelius handled at least part of the distribution of these benefits, although as we have seen, it is unclear when Swedenborg started to benefit from it.[111]

By the time he received Lars's answer on 26 June 1739, Swedenborg was already in Amsterdam, where he had traveled via Paris and where he remained for a year until the end of September 1740. There he completed and personally oversaw the printing of a two-volume work based on his *De Cerebro* manuscript by the famous French Huguenot publisher François Changuion, whose catalogue included Pierre Bayle's *Dictionnaire historique* and Leibniz's *Theodicée*. The work would become Swedenborg's first printed work in Amsterdam since a series of small metallurgical works from 1721, but also the

[106] Swedenborg had further relied on Gedda as an intermediary for the *Collegium Curiosorum* during his Grand Tour. See Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 56.
[107] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 356.
[108] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 359.
[109] Bergquist, *Secret*, pp. 358-9.
[110] Lindh, *Ekonomi*, Sept-Oct. (1929), p. 90.
[111] *British National Archives*: NA: SP 95/81, f. 63, cited in Schuchard, *Secret Agent*, p. 209.

first to be released by a major publisher (his previous Amsterdam works had been sold by the minor publisher Johan Oosterwyrk).[112] François Changuion had two bookshops in Amsterdam and London and was personally acquainted with Swedenborg's old friend, the Swedish ambassador to Holland Joachim Preis.[113]

Swedenborg's *Transactionum de Cerebro* and *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* overlap on many thematical and technical aspects and will be treated together in this chapter, with analyses of their differences when relevant for our study. *De Cerebro* was an almost 1,500 pages-long manuscript which consisted of anatomical quotes from works of authority about various parts of the brain, analyzed through his 'inductive method' previously used in *De Infinito* and *De Cupro*, and on occasions, contrasted with his own anatomical observations.[114] The manuscript provided the core materials for Swedenborg's *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* (London and Amsterdam, 1740-1741) an ambitious work which marked his refashioning as an anatomist. He would subsequently re-work the *De Cerebro* manuscript twice, giving birth to two subsequent variations: the *Stockholm* version (1740) and the *Hague/London* version (1744).[115] *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* consisted of eleven chapters overall, divided in four main topics (blood, generation, heart, brain) all commonly associated with soul-body anatomical studies. [116] As we will see in the next chapter, the two transactions of *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* were meant to be followed by an unpublished third one on the nature of 'fibre' and mental illnesses. More will also be said in the next chapter about the specific iatromechanist genre of *Oeconomia Regni Animali*, its taxonomic overtones, and its subsequent mixed reception.

[112] See Ryder, I, pp. 250, 255, 258,
[113] M. Teresa di Paola, 'François Changuion : 'à la tête de Juvenal in the Strand', *Huguenot Society Journal*, 31, (2018), pp. 41-2.
[114] On the number of pages, extant and non-extant of the manuscript, see *De Cerebro*, xxii.
[115] For reference and description of these two subsequent versions, see Ryder I, p. 465, and Ryder II, p. 36.
[116] See Ryder, II, p. 42, p. 60.

The main defining features of this milestone research can be broken down into five aspects. First, the methodology, which proceeds from comparison of famous anatomical authorities with his own first-hand anatomical practice. Swedenborg kept this methodology for ten years (1734-1744) until negative reviews, work fatigue and a rather negative 'inspiration' recorded in London on 26-27 October 1744 made him dismiss it as worthless 'trash'.[117] His anatomy of the brain is typical of the eighteenth century, breaking down the brain into 'parts' and then moving from one part to another. The long list of anatomists quoted provide a picture of anatomical sources of authority during the 1730s, although only the most relevant to our study will be mentioned here. In line with the times, his anatomy is predominantly 'fibrillary' and regards the soul as a most subtle substance irrigating the body via the *spiritus animales*, a distinctly Cartesian model which still featured iatromechanist traits inherited from his earlier tremulation research.

Second, Swedenborg described the nature of the soul and its nexus with the body by inventorying simple and composite fluids, viz. the subtle fluids contained within grosser bodily ones. Swedenborg described these organic fluids both in increasing order of physicality and according to their various physiological functions. Third and as a corollary, he developed his idea of a scaled doctrine of degrees inspired by mathematics to articulate the various levels between spiritual substances, brain areas and bodily organs and thus solve the problem of Cartesian dualism. In doing so, Swedenborg theorised four main 'degrees' related to four different brain areas which he believed to preside over the generation of cerebral fluids and the development of the human body. By breaking down the soul-body nexus into a scaled chain of physicality, Swedenborg hoped to identify the highest or 'ruling degrees' of the soul and control its highest powers, thus allowing to revert back to the human condition of Edenic times, freed from death, ignorance, diseases and physical deformities. This project included frequent references to the need for a new

[117] Ryder, II, p.60. See also Bergquist, *Diary*, §278, p. 313.

algebra-based anatomical language, also structured in degrees and mirroring differential calculus to express the currently-ineffable characteristics of the soul. Based on this research, Swedenborg finally developed a number of theological and moral considerations which stemmed from the conclusions of his anatomical research. Exploring and contextualizing those aspects will allow our study to better show how his interest in the soul-body question resulted in his most technical anatomical works, which in turn nourished his theological development.

b) Superior theorists and Swedenborg's practice of dissection

In the line of persistent views between 'lower' empiricists and 'superior' theorists in early modern medicine, Swedenborg opened his *Oeconomia* study of the soul with a broader classification of scholars into two categories: those endowed with superior faculties for anatomical observation, and those with a superior faculty for synthesis and interpretation. These dispositions he argued, were usually not found in the same people (§18), and he placed himself in the second category, particularly among the greatest kind of theorists, who only believe what can be 'confirmed by experience' (§19). Although Swedenborg presented himself as a superior theorist, he was however careful to introduce himself as no stranger to practical experience, claiming to have performed at least thirty dissections of animal hearts (§401), and cerebral dissections on both animal and human brains.[118] Swedenborg acknowledged a long list of illustrious predecessors and observers, in majority from the seventeenth century, and regarded four anatomists in particular as being most 'skilled observers' (see e.g. §67, §116): two Dutchmen, both disciples of the famous Jan Swammerdam: Antoni van Leeuwenhoek (1632-1723) perfecter of the microscope, and Frederik Ruysch (1638-1731), Dutch botanist and anatomist. The two others were the Italians Bartolomeo Eustachi (d.1574) a founding

[118] *OERA*, II, §340, p. 331.

figure of early modern anatomy who described the internal ear, and Giovanni Maria Lancisi (1654-1720) who first linked mosquitoes with the transmission of malaria. [119]

FIGURE 8 : Govert Bidloo, plate 'human brain and the skull', *Anatomia Humani Corporis*, (Amsterdam, 1685). Swedenborg quoted Bidloo in his anatomical research and performed various dissections of human brains. The Swedenborg Society.

3) Terminology, iatrochemical-anatomical terms, and cerebrospinal fluid

Swedenborg reaffirmed his view from *De Infinito* that the first obstacle to a rational knowledge of the human soul originated in the lack of an appropriate philosophical language to describe its properties, but also because of endless terminological confusion which leads to 'fighting with shadows' (§311, II). The idea that 'higher' truths can only be expressed via a 'higher' language (or language with superior properties to encode meaning) became a recurring idea in his works from 1730s onwards. As we will see in

[119] For a detailed analysis of Latin adjectives used by Swedenborg for these observers, see H. Helander, *The Latin of an Early Modern Scientist An analysis of the language in Emanuel Swedenborg's medical treatise Oeconomia I* (Unpublished monograph, 2017), pp. 70-1.

later chapters, it would later give way to his attempts to craft an algebra-based language to describe the soul's properties, an attempt which would in turn lead him to develop a theoretical framework for how scripture relates to anatomy and spiritual truths, thus providing the basis of his mature exegetical programme. The technical soul-body terminology used in his *Oeconomia* feature a predictable array of Aristotelian terms such as *accidens, contingens, efficiens, obiectum, subiectum,* along with a scholastic glossary coined by Scholastic philosophers from the 13th century onwards (*accidentalitas, actuo, causo, ens, substantiatum*). Distinctive Wolffian-Leibnizian terms are also present, such as effigies, *harmonia, monas,* and *praestabilitus,* and were often discussed in relation to Swedenborg's own key concepts of *correspondentia, imago, repraesentatio, respondeo, typus, influxus, influere, series, gradus,* and *constabilita* (§155) which he developed through *De Cerebro* and his *Oeconomia*.

Before analyzing the technical content of these two works, it seems important to clarify some early modern terms of cerebral anatomy used by Swedenborg and the authors he quoted. Among those, the *periosteum* refers to what we now call the *dura mater,* while the 'Infundibulum' was a term formerly used to designate the region of the hypothalamus. The cerebrospinal fluid was known was the 'pituitous liquor', a popular term forged from the Greek *πτυο*, 'I spit', due to the former belief (also endorsed by Swedenborg) that saliva and nose secretions originated from the third ventricle via the pituitary gland.

Although hagiographic scholarship has indeed credited Swedenborg with the modern rediscovery of the cerebrospinal fluid, my research suggests that this alleged achievement is largely exaggerated.[120] Like many of his contemporaries, Swedenborg did describe the

[120] T. E. Gordh, W. G.P. Mair and P. Sourander, 'Swedenborg, Linnaeus and Brain Research and the Roles of Gustaf Retzius and Alfred Stroh in the Rediscovery of Swedenborg's Manuscripts', *Upsala Journal of Medical Sciences*, 112(2) (2007), pp. 143-64.

grosser ‘pituitous liquor’ usually discarded by anatomists when the brain was extracted from the skull. In *De Cerebro*, Swedenborg described the liquor as abundantly found in the meninges, the inner dura mater, the arachnoid mater, and the tortuous convolutions of the cerebrum and its medullary substance (§639). He described the worn-out liquor as secreted in the cerebrum’s third ventricle, and evacuated through the foramina of the cribriform plate (viz. through the nose), a common description which followed the opinion of his time about the cerebrospinal fluid as a gross juice of no use evacuated through the nose.

Moreover, in the previous chapter, we saw how Swedenborg referred to Paracelsian, iatrochemistry while remaining sceptical about the transmutational aspects of alchemy. His new anatomical work pursued this tendency. *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* not only belonged to a specific genre of Dutch iatromechanist anatomy, but also aimed to appeal to fellow seekers of prelapsarian faculties of the human soul, many of whom were deeply engaged with alchemical literature. As a result, Swedenborg inserted references to popular alchemical metaphors and terms as synonyms for what he described. This included references to the blood as the *prima materia* for all bodily fluids, within a new list of thirty bodily fluids based on the *Compendium anatomicum* (1721) of Frankfurt-born anatomy professor Laurentius Heister (1683-1758): [121]

> The chyle, milk, blood, serum, lymph, animal spirit, saliva, mucus of the mouth, bile, liquor from pancreas, stomach, intestines, esophagus, brain, eyes, thorax, pericardium, abdomen, tunica vaginalis testis, semen, the liquid of the prostate glands, the mucus of the nose, tonsils, joints, urethra, uterus, vagina and fallopian tubes, the humor of the ova, and that in which the foetus swims, cerumen of the ears, urine and sweat.

Within this list, Swedenborg described the blood as providing ‘the first principles for the concoction of any liquor’, while the division and distribution of the blood through arteries, veins and nerves supposedly allowed the production of grosser bodily fluids,

[121] *OERA* I, chap. 2, §225-6.

similar to the processes of 'percolation', 'concoction', 'tincture, essence, spirit, *menstruum*, laudanum, extract' which echoed various phases of the alchemical process.[122] In his *De Cerebro* manuscript (§1198-1201), he had already affirmed that the body can be seen as a highly equipped 'chemical laboratory' with substances prepared for the various purposes of the body, such as its 'nutriment and renovation of textures', and 'furnished with its alembics, vials, recipients and retorts; a laboratory which seals the spirit in vesicles and membranes' (§1202). Using similar iatromechanical semantics in his *Oeconomia*, he further claimed that in its fluidic form, the soul is 'concocted' into the womb from blood, nervous juices and 'other matters suitable to its nature'.[123]

This research points to Swedenborg's elaborate doctrine of bodily fluids, which constitute a crucial example of his attempts to present a circulatory system which incorporated the human soul. Although he listed thirty bodily fluids in line with Heister, Swedenborg mostly focused on five cerebral fluids, which he identified and classified from increasing order of physicality and grossness.

FIGURE 9 : Swedenborg's doctrine of cerebral fluids, from subtler to grosser.

I.	The ***spiritus animales***, Cartesian most subtle fluid, organic, volatile, active principle of the soul, generated by the *cerebellula* (§84).
II.	The **spirituous juice**, fibrillary juice or white blood (*albo sanguis*). Circulates under pure form in the [nervous] fibres (§613). Named after the 'white' plasma present both in the red blood and in the nerves.
III.	the **nervous juice**, mixed with the volatile *spiritus animales* so they don't fly away (§84), nourishing bones and helping hair to grow, in a similar way to the growth of plants and trees. (§648). Contained between the fibres (§613).
IV.	the **red blood**, essentially composed of white blood (§613) but circulating in arteries and blood vessels.
V.	The grosser and slimy **pituitous liquor** (§650) found in the brain and evacuated through the nose.

[122] *OERA* I, chap. 2, §226: 6-8.
[123] *OERA* II, chap. 3, §295.

Although the seat of the passive, incorruptible, immortal soul remains within the brain, the soul, he argued, is present everywhere in the body under an active form of the *spiritus animales*.[124] Through this passive/active duality, Swedenborg clearly distinguished the *spiritus animales* from the soul, arguing that the soul in itself cannot be constantly reborn, and 'should in no way be confounded with its organs and substantiates' (§725, §811). Further in line with Descartes, Swedenborg saw the *spiritus animales* as volatile and mixed with a grosser 'elementary fluid' which he called the 'nervous juice', produced in the cortical substance to prevent the *spiritus animales* from flying away (§84).

As shown on the chart, Swedenborg also believed in the existence of an intermediary fluid circulating in the nerves, which he named '*albo sanguis*' (translated as 'white blood, spirituous juice/fluid or fibrillary juice') based from observations of the 'white' plasma present both in the red blood and in the nerves. Swedenborg likely observed plasma when decanting blood in glass tubes, which let the blood corpuscles sink to the bottom while the plasma remains at the top, a superior 'white' organic essence of the blood. This vivifying 'white blood' he argued, circulates from the arteries to the fibres, then from the fibres to the vesicles and muscular follicles, glands and viscera, then to the veins, and also from the arteries to the heart and fibres before reverting back to the brain (§618). Swedenborg believed that the white blood must initially be first 'concocted' and generated in the ovum, before playing a crucial role in the prenatal formation of the cortical substance, which later becomes the site where the foetus' own white blood is generated and presides over the formation of its whole body.[125] The *albo sanguis* is probably one of Swedenborg's most original concepts. Although scholars have argued that was not until his unpublished sequel *De Fibra* (circa 1742) that Swedenborg clearly

[124] *De Cerebro*, §83, §89, §619. See also *Principia*, chap. 6, p. 141.
[125] *OERA*, II, chap. 3, §295.

distinguished his *spiritus animales* from the 'white blood', my research points to a clear distinction already present in the *De Cerebro* manuscripts.[126]

a) Generation, epigenesis, and formative forces

Tying further into Paracelsian terminology, Swedenborg relied on the concept of *vis formatrix* to expose his epigenesis theory, viz. the idea that embryos were formed part-by-part over time, rather than preformed in the male seed.[127] In his *Oeconomia*, Swedenborg detailed a theory of generation which opposed the preformationist positions of scholars such as Marcello Malpighi and Leibniz, leaning instead on the side of William Harvey's Aristotelian epigenetic theory.[128] Generation debates typically questioned whether the foetus' soul was the same or different than the parent's, whether only one soul was shared by mankind, or whether individual divine essences were replicated at each generation. On this debate, Swedenborg's position was intermediary. Although he claimed that all souls were transmitted and provided by the father (in line with Aristotle's classic *De Generatione Animalis*) he also believed that all souls ultimately originated from Adam whom he claimed, directly received his own soul from God.[129]

Modern scholars such as Inge Jonsson have noted that Swedenborg's hybrid positioning between Harveian epigenesis and a more 'emanationist' form of preformationism position him closer to post-Cartesian anatomists such as the German chymist and physician Georg Ernst Stahl (1660-1734). [130] We know that Swedenborg had reviewed Stahl in his notebook, noting the latter's objections to Leibniz's pre-established

[126] Acton, *The Life of Emanuel Swedenborg* (Bryn Athyn, 1958) p. 496.
[127] Benjamin Goldberg, 'Epigenesis and the rationality of nature in William Harvey and Margaret Cavendish', *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences*, 39(2) June (2017), p. 1.
[128] Jonsson, *Drama*, pp. 89-90.
[129] Aristotle's *De Generatione Animalis*, book II chap. IV. See also *OERA* part II, chap. 3, §295, §310.
[130] Jonsson, *Drama*, p. 90.

harmony.[131] Similar positions of spiritual preformationism were not unusual at the time, and had been famously discussed by Jan Swammerdam (1637-1680) as a simple theological solution to explain the transmission of original sin from a single primordial genitor.[132] Overall, it is not surprising that someone as devout as Swedenborg would defend a monogenetic origin for the human race, at a time when pre-Adamitic and polygenetic positions found in Isaac La Peyrère, Spinoza and Hobbes were commonly associated with atheism.[133] This also prompted him for the first time to take a clear stance against soul transmigration, which he dismissed as a 'dream of the old philosophers' (§351, II) in contrast both to Plato's *Timaeus* and oriental philosophies popularised by travelogues.[134] By doing so, he also refuted the existence of dead bodies possessed by departed souls or sensational cases of soul-transference, as previously claimed by the controversial alchemist Conrad Dippel.

Swedenborg's use of the term *vis formatrix* further highlights his epigenetic leanings, which combined his conception of an ontological metaphysical point with an embryology distinctly opposed to preformationist homunculus theory (§249). He identified his *vis formatrix* to what other scholars had called either 'nature in action', *vis plastica* and *Archeus* (§253). The *vis plastica* was a popular concept in the works of Johan Amos Comenius and Jacob Schegk (1511-1587), professor of philosophy and medicine at Tübingen and author of the *De Plastica seminis facultate* (1580).[135] The concept had also been used by Harvey in his epigenesis theory and proved popular beyond anatomy, for instance with Athanasius Kircher's application of *plastica* to the formation of mineral

[131] On Stahl, see *Notebook*, pp. 357-8.
[132] Jonsson, *Drama*, p. 90.
[133] Philip Almond, Adam, 'Pre-Adamites, and Extra-Terrestrial Beings in Early Modern Europe', *Journal of Religious History*, 30(2) June (2006), p. 168.
[134] Plato, *Timée et Critias*, pp. 90-1.
[135] S. Bucheneau and R. Lo Presti, 'Jacob Schegk' in S. Bucheneau and R. Lo Presti (eds.) *Human and Animal Cognition in Early Modern Philosophy and Medicine* (Pittsburg, 2017).

bodies, or with Henry More and Ralph Cudworth's own theories of 'plastic nature'.[136] The role of Swedenborg's *vis formatrix* was to command the foetus's development organ by organ (§247) and continue to act after the embryo gets out of the womb (§254). Such a force he claimed, represented the constant impulse behind growth and body healing (§216, §254).[137] Although it was the first and most perfect force present in the body (§257), it was still a mere shadow of what it used to be before the Fall (§259). In *Oeconomia's* second volume, Swedenborg formally identified the *vis formatrix* with the spiritual fluid, viz. the fluidic state of the soul in the body and 'purest natural essence of men' ((§292, II and 295, II) also equated with the soul itself (§269, II).

Oeconomia Regni Animalis also displayed Swedenborg's first and only mention of the Paracelsian term *Archeus* (§253), borrowed from the Greek *ἀρχαῖος* ('ancient') and with a distinct meaning in Paracelsus's philosophy.[138] The concept had become a popular reference in alchemical literature, referring to the vital force or vital substance sustaining all things.[139] In his popular *Lexicon philosophicum terminorum* (1653), Pomeranian poet, historiographer and philosopher Johannes Micraelius (1597-1658) even defined the *Archeus* without reference to Paracelsus, and noted its use in alchemical-chemycal literature as a synonym for *vis formatrix*, *vis plastica*, *natura agens* or *substantia formatrix*.[140] The term was also used by Swedish anti-Aristotelians and Cartesians such as Johan Bilberg in his thesis *De Magnetismis Rerum* (1683) and by the professor of medicine at the university of Åbo, Elias Til-Landz (1686).[141] At the Bureau of Mines, Swedenborg operated in a context where Paracelsus was still regarded as an influential figure and his terminology widely used. Therefore, it is not surprising to see the term

[136] Bucheneau and Lo Presti, 'Jacob Schegk'.
[137] However, we can note that on §293, II (part VIII of the *De Anima Humana* chapter), Swedenborg identified the spirituous fluid as the force for formation, growth, renovation and determination of the 'organic machine'.
[138] Helander, *Oeconomia* I, pp. 144-5.
[139] Wilson, *Swedenborg, Paracelsus*, pp. 175-206.
[140] Helander, *Oeconomia* I, pp. 144-5.
[141] Helander, *Oeconomia* I, pp. 144-5.

Archaeus appearing here, mentioned as a synonym for what he tried to pitch and express to his readers.

b) Responding to Leibniz: Swedenborg's monad and *harmonia constabilita*

As we have seen, Swedenborg's new soul-body research was not only an extension of the Cartesian programme, but also a response to Leibnizian-Wolffian pre-established harmony at a time where Swedenborg was still strongly influenced by Wolffian physico-theology and Leibniz's *Monadologie*. As part of this response, he formulated his own positions on both monads and pre-established harmony.

First, Swedenborg gave his own definition of the monad, which differed from Leibniz's.[142] Swedenborg's account echoed various aspects of Plotinus's *Enneads*, a book he had bought at an auction during his student years with annotations of his rumoured ancestor, the great Swedish poet Georg Stiernhielm.[143] However, it also differed from ancient philosophical understandings of the term from the Greek *μονάς*, with its genitive form *μονάδος*, 'unit', used to denote the first number in a series from which the others derive.[144] In contrast to Leibniz's monads which were famously defined as immaterial and synchronised units forming the elementary substance of the universe, Swedenborg presented his monad as a first minimal unit of a ternary series of degrees, which served to distinguish the three primary fluids of the soul (the red blood, *albo sanguis*, and *spiritus animales*).

Moreover, Swedenborg's take on the monad tied into his belief in the existence of the *cerebellula,* and *spherulae* (translated as 'cortical glands' 'little spheres' or 'globules') of increasing size.[145] Based on micro-macro inference and his own naked eye observations,

[142] For reference use of 'monad' see *OERA*, I, §629.
[143] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 19. See also Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 477.
[144] Helander, *Oeconomia I*, p. 158.
[145] *Lexicon*, p. 431.

he now inferred that the human brain must contain mini-brains (the smallest being the *cerebellula*) placed inside another, down to the infinitesimal elementary level of the human soul (§36).[146] The *cerebellula* were responsible for generating the *spiritus animales* (§84) while the grosser *spherulae* were responsible for generating the nervous juice which thickens the *spiritus animales* (§85). Those were supposedly part of the brain fibres, tasked with containing the 'passive potencies' of the soul, while acting as the cerebral circulatory nexus of the soul-body *contiguum*. In *De Cerebro,* Swedenborg viewed the 'marvelous nexus' between soul and body as mirroring the Harveian circulation of the blood, albeit performed by the *spiritus animales* travelling in a dynamic circular motion (§811) from the infinitely small *cerebellula* to the largest fibres of the body. By this gradual chain he claimed, 'a 'perpetual circle' is achieved, 'released and ever reborn in copious abundance' in the cortical substance and diffused via the 'purest fibres of the nerves, and the blood' in all the parts of the body. Although some modern scholars have tried to construe Swedenborg's *cerebellula* as an early model of the neuron, such a discovery seems widely exaggerated, especially since microscopes in the 1730s did not allow anatomists to observe what we now call the nerve cells and neurons. The little dots which Swedenborg could observe while dissecting (and which he interpreted as mini-brains within the brain) were actually artefacts which typically appeared on the surface of boiled cerebral tissues when dead brains were prepared for anatomical study.[147]

The second aspect of Swedenborg's response to Leibniz's soul-body system was his proposed correction of the latter's pre-established harmony. Alluding to the Leibniz-Clarke disputes, Swedenborg had noted various criticisms of Leibniz's soul-body system in his notebook: Newton dismissed the *harmonia praestabilita* as a 'true miracle opposed

[146] *Lexicon*, p. 52.
[147] Dunér, *Natural Philosophy*, p. 386.

to the experience of all men', while Samuel Clarke also criticised Leibniz's soul-body relation as no different from the relation between two synchronised clocks at a distance from each other.[148] At the end of his *Oeconomia*, Swedenborg could not resist inserting a neologism for his newly-baptised system of soul-body interaction: *harmonia constabilita*, 'co-established harmony', a direct response to Leibniz's *harmonia praestabilita*.[149] He defined his rudimentary 'co-established harmony' as a continuous and 'efficient dynamic coordination of the soul' with the fibres of the body, through constant circulation of the 'spiritual fluid'.[150] He described this harmony as 'co-established' because of its alleged presence from birth, and because the human body was the last organic form of the soul. The relationship between the spiritual fluid and the fibres of the human body was described (for the first time) as a relationship of 'correspondence'. More broadly and as we will see in the next chapter, the creation of the term *harmonia constabilita* aimed to facilitate discussion of Swedenborg's position in intellectual circles while positioning his system as a third way, a middle-ground between Leibniz's pre-established harmony and Cartesian occasionalism. However, due to its late insertion into the work, *harmonia constabilita* was merely outlined in *Oeconomia Regni Animalis*, and acted as a teaser for a subsequent work which proved considerably difficult to publish. The concept eventually proved short-lived: as we will see, it was dropped in Swedenborg's painfully-born sequel on the nature of the soul: the doomed *Regnum Animale* (1744-1745).[151]

4) Soul, doctrine of degrees and Adamic powers

a) Ruling degrees, growing foetuses and curing monsters

We have seen how in *De Infinito*, Swedenborg planned to solve Cartesian dualism by arguing the existence of intermediary degrees between the soul and the body. As seen in

[148] *Notebook*, pp. 356-7.
[149] *OERA*, §297, II, p. 283
[150] *OERA* §297, II, pp. 282-3
[151] *OERA* §297, II, p. 283.

the first chapter, he had already hinted at such an idea in his early tremulation research by distinguishing between five degrees of vibratory intensity for the human soul. In his new anatomical research, Swedenborg still hoped that by dividing the brain into scaled degrees, he could formalise cerebral interactions, mathematically demonstrate the existence of the soul, and even unlock the lapsed powers of the human soul. The idea of intermediary degrees would prove paramount to his soul-body research, for as we will see, thirty years later in 1769, he would present the Cartesian system of soul-body interaction as the right one, albeit corrected in the light of his own theory of corresponding, discrete degrees. In the meantime, in his *De Cerebro* Swedenborg divided the brain into four scaled degrees to illustrate the hierarchies between various interdependent brain-parts, from the most infinitesimal scale to the whole brain structure.

FIGURE 10 : Swedenborg's four degrees underlying the structure of the brain

I.	The elementary level of the **soul** itself (§85)
II.	The infinitesimal scale of the ***cerebellula***, producing the *spiritus animales* (§84)
III.	The grosser ***spherulae*** (§88-89) which produce the nervous substance thickending the spiritus animales (§84).
IV.	The **brain** as a whole (§85) with its associated fibres, the medulla oblongata and medulla spinalis (§85).

Each degree he argued, must be directly governed by its superior, up to the highest ruling degree of the human soul. Swedenborg believed that such a hierarchical, quaternary scaled classification could allow to understand (and master) the laws underpinning bodily development, from fetal state to adulthood. This belief stemmed from his readings of Martin Schurig's *Syllepsilogia* (1731), which exposed the widely-held belief that thoughts from the pregnant mother could manifest on foetuses by birthmarks of various forms, via the 'spirituous essence of blood'. According to Schurig, such marks could bear the form of fruits, vegetables, stripes, spiders or mushrooms, depending on the thoughts,

appetites and fears of the pregnant mother (§1199). For Swedenborg, this widely-accepted belief provided evidence that the soul directly presides over the bodily development. Based on a reversed inference, he thus reasoned that since the usual 'construction' of the body is determined according to the ruling degree, then the dominance of the lower degrees produces monstrous bodies such as conjoined twins (§1198) because of 'hereditary evil'. Such twisted bodies Swedenborg claimed, aspire to be reborn, and this might be attained by advancing science on the soul (§1200). This marked his first interest in teratology, a topic which as we will see, he would continue to explore in his later unpublished generation manuscript *Anatomia Corporis* (1743). With such promising practical applications, it is obvious that knowing the ruling degrees of the soul not only becomes an absolute priority, but the key to unlock the soul's highest powers and counter the hereditary evil stemming from original sin.

b) The Fall and physical immortality

The existence of ruling degrees highlights Swedenborg's belief that the soul intrinsically possesses full command over the human body, its muscles, actions and reflexes. However, as seen in the first chapter, he believed this coordination to be disturbed and hindered in most people through a complex process of takeover from the lower corporeal degrees caused by the hereditary original sin.

In *De Cerebro,* Swedenborg believed that the soul operates without any prior learning, in contrast to inferior degrees which need to be instructed with everything (§1198). Although this is the most common state, Swedenborg stated that in some 'extremely rare' cases, the soul still ruled in certain people, with quite miraculous consequences (§1198) such as physical immortality and possessing 'every science as a natural gift'. This was the standard state of coordination between soul and body during Edenic times, an idea already featured in *De Infinito* where he presented Adam as under the direct rule of the

'purest essence of the soul'.[152] As a result, Swedenborg advanced that such a body subject might become 'part of the purest world', thus acquiring the same immortality as the soul itself.[153] From this it follows that exceptional, immortal individuals must have been born on Earth since the Fall, free of hereditary evil and death, and with immediate knowledge of all sciences.

This bold idea, perhaps a mere thought-experiment, was not developed further in the manuscript, although as we have seen, restoring mankind's faculties to a prelapsarian state remained a widespread motive behind scientific investigation during the early modern period.[154] Swedenborg's belief about the existence of people born free of the consequences of the Fall resonated with Calvinist debates about the existence of election and predestination, but also with wider discussions about the nature of sainthood. Swedenborg had long been interested in miraculous cases of prolongation of life, related to the power of the soul over the limits of the physical body, as seen in the case of the maid Estrid.[155] Yet, the existence of such individuals through history should be more broadly put in perspective with Aquinian and Augustinian theology on the physical, spiritual and epistemological consequences of the Fall, along with a wider revival of Augustinian theology in the Protestant world.[156]

Swedenborg's writings and readings clearly situate him within this revival, as shown by his own extensive readings of Augustine.[157] His ambitious Adamic programme was also in the line of natural philosophers such as Francis Bacon and Robert Boyle, who posited that a restoration of mankind's prelapsarian faculties could only be partially accomplished through a long and painful experimental and scientific work.[158] This shows

[152] *De Infinito*, p. 179.
[153] *De Infinito*, p. 179.
[154] Harrison, *Fall of Man*, p. 11.
[155] Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 16-7.
[156] Harrison, *Fall of Man*, pp. 6, 11.
[157] For the full list of Swedenborg's quotations and references to Augustine in *Notebook*, pp. 524-5.
[158] Harrison, *Fall of Man*, p. 6.

that Swedenborg not only sought philosophical fame nor to prove the existence of God: he also hoped to achieve control over the human soul and revert back to mankind's prelapsarian relationship to God. This would allow the cure of cure deformed bodies, an instant grasp on all sciences, the achievement of immortality, and even a new paradisiacal prosperity on Earth (§1198).

c) The Adamic state, free will, and the material nature of the soul

In *De Cerebro*, Swedenborg wrote about 'ruling degrees' of the soul and how they could lead to rare occurrences of humans born with an Adamic bodily coordination. These speculations presented the restoration of Adamic coordination as ideal and desirable. However, in *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* he partially revised these views, scaling down his ambitions of restoring mankind's prelapsarian powers, probably prompted by a brutal change on the subject of miracles (see later section on miracles). Instead, Swedenborg warned of the consequences of such a restoration in an age where evil prevails, highlighting instead the providential nature of mankind's current limited state.

For instance, he expressed concerns about the overpopulation which could be brought by such powers. A restored dominance of ruling degrees would not only bring an end to physical decline and death, but also render natural birth obsolete, leading to such an overpopulation that not 'a thousand worlds' would be enough to host mankind (§299, II).[159] Being ruled by the soul from birth would drive Man towards a constant perfecting of his state, which in return would require constant intervention from the divine to prevent these bodies from 'exalting themselves above God'.[160] Individualities and distinctions between soul and body would be erased, because all would be equal in power. Such a state would also bring degeneration and perversity as the 'least

[159] *OERA* §299, II, p. 285.
[160] *OERA* §299, II, p. 285.

delinquencies' would become 'indelible' on the soul when it indulges into evil. The current limited coordination between soul and body was therefore the result of a well-balanced providence, which protected the human soul by diverting evil to the intermediary substance of the mind. Although the idea of people naturally born with an Adamic coordination was abandoned, Swedenborg maintained that by a right combination of will and devotion to God, a higher state close to the Adamic coordination and adapted to our Age could be regained:

> If then we strive to the utmost of our power to will and to be able, it follows as a matter of course, that a higher power then breathes upon us, and raises our efforts to powers not human; and thereby brings us back into a state emulous of that liberty which we have lost.[161] […]
> By liberty we are raised to a higher state, even almost to the state of integrity before the Fall.[162]

Swedenborg's project to investigate the nature of the soul derived from 'the ambition of Adam', deep-rooted within mankind and carried on by his human descendants (§209, II). In his *Oeconomia*, he ambitioned to expand on the subject in a prospective sequel on free will and free choice (e.g. §320, 321, 323, II), drawing a difference between the 'free choice' operated by the mind, and the theological concept of free will which he claimed, was a faculty inherent to the soul.[163] Based on a quote from Augustine's *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio* (book III, chap. III) Swedenborg believed that what distinguished human souls between themselves resided in moral distinction and the ability of free choice.[164] Man has a functional predisposition for wisdom, rooted in him from the start by God (§298, II), a trait visible in humans' longer lifespan than many animals, a larger brain, with better-organised arteries and veins (§298, II). Swedenborg argued that the longer infancy of humans, usually regarded as an imperfection, should be viewed as a sign of perfection compared to animals, because of the superior quality of human's spiritual fluid

[161] *OERA*, §331, II, p. 323.
[162], *OERA*, §334, II, p. 325.
[163] *OERA*, §328, II, p. 321
[164] *OERA* §335, II, p. 326.

(§344, II). Perhaps hinting at his own future transformation four years later, Swedenborg believed that, armed with a knowledge of the soul and a cautious exercise of free will, the ladder of *psychologia rationalis* might be ascended, although such a process could lead Man beyond the limits of what human faculties can transcend (§315, II). Such a higher knowledge of the soul ought not to be put in the hands of the public: it is dangerous and might lead uninformed minds to error (§316, II).

Swedenborg presented his Adamic doctrine as a synthesis which would allow both materialists and idealists to recognise and understand their ideas through his system (§289,II). This compromise extended to the issue of whether the soul is material or immaterial, which he argued, was essentially a definitional issue (§311, II). If matter were defined like Descartes as 'extension endued with inertia', then the soul is immaterial (§311, II). This led him to conclude that the soul must be both material and immaterial: everything created has extension (Cartesian criterion) and therefore materiality. The soul has an extended basis, thus it must be partly material. Nevertheless, the soul is also immaterial as it also acts as the essence of life, in an Aristotelian sense. This dual position was typical of Harveian anatomy, where the soul was both envisioned as an organic entity and as an entelechy, or principle of the bodily functions.[165] It was on the basis of this conclusion that Swedenborg presented his position as a *via media* on which both materialists and immaterialists could agree (§311, II).

d) Physical immortality, heroic faculties, and retention of arterial blood

Toning down his views on miracles, Swedenborg hinted at alternative ways to obtain immortality, such as through the cultivation of heroic virtues (§231, 232; II). Struck by the observation that after death, the blood flows from arteries into the veins (§231) he

[165] B. Goldberg, *William Harvey, soul searcher: teleology and philosophical anatomy* (PhD thesis, University of Pittsburgh, 2012).

inferred that every 'virtue' which allows to the retain blood in the arteries acts as 'an abode of life', while everything which contributes to freely spread arterial blood into the veins eventually leads to death. Heroic valor is a virtue commanded by the soul and manifested in the body by a retention of arterial blood (§232). Courage triggers an absence of fear from death: its physiological manifestation in the body fills it with life by maintaining an optimal equilibrium of the blood, an 'increased presence of the mind', and a 'quick intellectual discernment', which otherwise would result in 'heart's palpitations, cold sweat, defection of the sense, drooping of the limbs, half dying with fright and dread of death'.

This allowed Swedenborg to pay tribute (again) to the late king Charles XII, the *Heros Septentrionis* who reportedly lived without fear, in a context of renewed popularity for the late Carolinian king and the resuming of Swedish military ambitions by the Hats. Although Swedenborg favoured the devolved parliamentarism of the Horn period, he continued to exalt the deeds of Charles XII in his new anatomical work, tying into a fresh wave of nostalgic Carolinian revival which Voltaire himself had celebrated in his historical biography *Histoire de Charles XII* (1731).[166] Swedenborg would later revise his views of Charles XII in very negative ways in his later accounts of the spiritual world.[167]

Linking immortality to his theology of works, Swedenborg used the example of Charles XII to illustrate the link between physical and moral immortality, the latter brought forth by heroic deeds (§231). The statement that deeds bring immortal life was a newly established feature of Swedenborg's rejection of *sola fide* since his second religious manuscript *De Fide et bonis operibus* written in Rome in 1739.[168] Swedenborg justified further the virtues of heroic deeds by listing classical examples drawn from literature,

[166] Voltaire, *Histoire de Charles XII* (London, 1731) tome 16, p. 133.
[167] Dunér. *Natural Philosophy*, p. 407.
[168] Ryder, I, 425.

such as Mucius Scaevola slaying the king Porsenna and Horatius Cocles defending the bridge against the Etruscan army (§326, II). By doing so, he compared this semantic field of battle and fight to the wresting of human conscience between free will, judgment and reason (§362, II). Hinting at his own quest for knowledge and recognition, Swedenborg concluded by stating that the elevated souls among men naturally aspire to immortality of fame, as a reflection of the immortality of their souls (§349, II).

5) Swedenborg's four auras, and the four organs of the soul

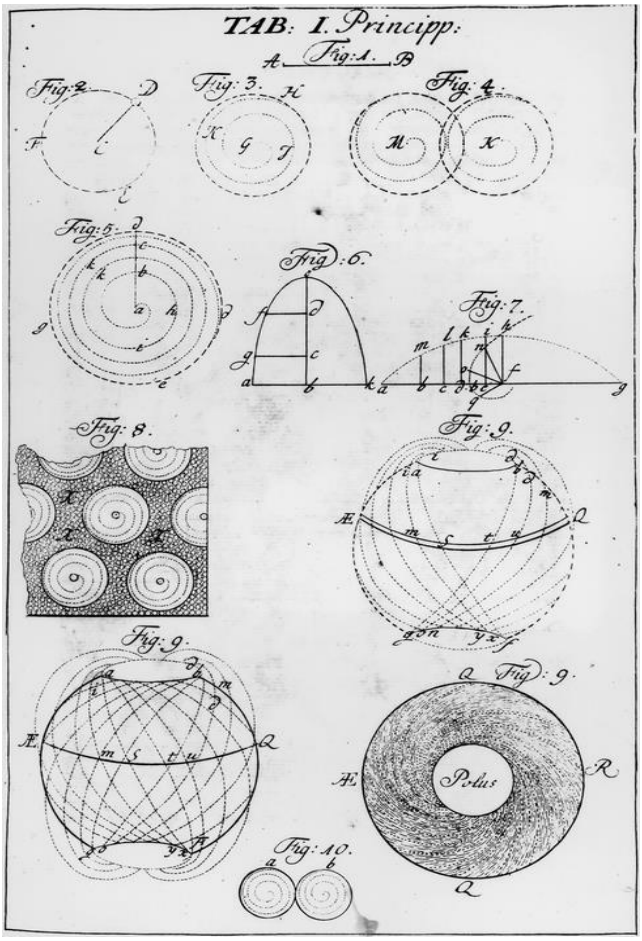
From the existence of the magnetic aura and of degrees subtler to ether outlined in his *Principia* (1734), Swedenborg detailed his belief in four auras, atmospheres or 'forces of the universe', ranking from lowest to highest as air, ether, the magnetic ether, and the 'universal' aura.[169] Swedenborg based the existence of those auras such as air through literature on respiration and air-pumps, while the existence of ether he wrote, was indicated by optical experiences, the faculty of sight and the spread of odors and colours in any space deprived of air. It is on the basis of such views that he denied the existence of void in space, in a similar way to Descartes in the latter's *Traité du monde et de la lumière* (1677).[170] Swedenborg also viewed ether as the cause of *ignis fatuus*, 'wandering meteors' and many other 'mysterious' phenomena.[171] Swedenborg distinguished this ether from a higher 'magnetic ether' responsible for the Earth's magnetic poles, and governing animals, which naturally allowed themselves to find their way as they are 'living magnets'.

He finally posited the existence at highest level of a force 'most universal, highest and most perfect' exerting its influence over the human soul, analogically to the magnetic aura governing animals. Swedenborg referred to this force as the 'universal aura' (§352,

[169] *OERA*, §272-273, II.
[170] *OERA* §272, II, p. 249.
[171] *OERA*, §272, II.

II).[172] Such a force directs and embraces all vortices in the universe, in a Cartesian 'grand vortex' which sustains its whole structure and brings light from the sun and the stars to the inhabitants of Earth.[173] Evidence for such a Cartesian force could be inferred from the vortices of the Earth, the existence of magnetic attraction and the magnetic poles. Swedenborg presented his magnetic force as one of the four 'auras' or 'atmospheres' which represent the 'forms of the forces of the universe', distinct and hierarchically scaled in order of subtlety (§272, II). Ineffable ideas belong to superior auras, and consist of 'real essences' of things (§289, II), a reference to John Locke's *An Essay concerning human understanding* (1689), who was a important influence for Swedenborg in both his notebook and *Oeconomia*.

FIGURE 11 : Plate about poles and Earth's vortices, Swedenborg's *Principia* (Leipzig, 1734).



[172] *OERA*, §352, II, also called 'supreme aura' §313, II, 'celestial aura', 'primal aura' §344, II.
[173] *OERA*, §272, II, pp. 250-1.

Swedenborg associated his theory of four auras to what he called the four 'organs of the soul' (§269, II), a division inspired by Augustine's *De Trinitate* and *De Anima* (§282, II). Swedenborg's four organs of the soul consist of the spiritual fluid, responsible for consciousness and the Cartesian 'intuition of ends', viz. the innate ability within man to think of the divine. The second organ of the soul is the mind (*mens*) which understands, thinks and wills. The third is the animus, which conceives, imagines and desires, while the last is formed by the ensemble of five external senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch (§269, II) to which Swedenborg would devote a whole unpublished treatise in 1744, meant to represent the fourth part of *Regnum Animale*.[174]

FIGURE 12 : Swedenborg's four organs of the human soul, associated to four corresponding auras/forces of the universe.

I.	Spiritual Fluid (intuition of ends, ability to think about God)	Universal aura (Grand Vortex, linked to soul)
II.	Mind (*mens*; seat of understanding, thinking and will)	Magnetic Ether (linked to animals, poles)
III.	*Animus* (imagination, desire)	Ether (Carries colours in air-deprived space)
IV.	Five external senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch)	Air (Pumps)

These subdivisions marked Swedenborg's first extensive study of the human mind (*mens*), which he firmly distinguished from the soul (§278, II) while acknowledging such a position was 'against the general opinion' (§276, II). In a Lockean fashion, Swedenborg saw the mind as a blank slate on which knowledge is built through the years, based on observation that when madness of the mind occurs, the functions of the body do not cease. The mind is the 'first determination of the soul', into which the intellectual light of

[174] *De Sensu communi, ejusque Influxu in Animam, et hujus reactione* (1744), partially published as the third and final part of the *Regnum Animale* series in London, 1744.

the soul flows in.[175] It stands in the middle of a double influence, namely *a priori* information, light and virtue from the soul, and *a posteriori* information from the sensory senses.[176] Its main function is to think, which is but a higher and 'more sublime' form of imagination (§279, II).

Swedenborg not only distinguished between the soul and the mind, but also separated the mind from a lower entity called *animus*. This segmentation followed Augustine's *De Trinitate* (4.1.3) and more broadly the classical platonic separation of the soul into several inferior soul substances associated with specific body parts.[177] Although Swedenborg segmented the soul into *anima*, *mens* and *animus*, he firmly maintained their ultimate unity. Augustine's approach to the soul's 'triunity' certainly influenced Swedenborg's model, although as we will see, he would later become a fierce critic of Augustine's readings of the Athanasian creed. Swedenborg regarded the inferior animus as responsible for conceptualization, imagination, desire and perception of space and time. Anger, joy, envy, indignation and fear all arise from the animus he wrote, which must in turn be dominated by the mind (§279, II). Its existence was evidenced from somnambulists, rumoured to be led solely by the instincts of the animus, without any reason or understanding from the mind.[178] In Swedenborg's later theology, the animus would later become responsible for shaping appearances in the world of spirits, through the faculty of imagination.[179]

6) *Homo internus* vs *homo externus*: soul, epistemology, and afterlife

The question of the soul subdivided into organs was closely linked to the dual nature of human perception. Although in 1740 Swedenborg had not produced a detailed study of

[175] *OERA*, §277, II, p. 258.
[176] §278, II, p. 259. See also §287, II. This distinction would later be of influence on Kant.
[177] Plato, *Timée et Critias*, pp. 93-6.
[178] *OERA*, §281, II, p. 263.
[179] AC §3020.

the five senses, he already posited that external sensorial perception, acute during wakefulness, acted as a mere reflection of 'internal sensations', prevalent during sleep and dreams (§281, II). As an organ of epistemic perception Swedenborg thought the soul to be analogous yet superior to the eye, which is bound in its orbit but can extend its vision up to the distant stars of the heavens. It is the same for the 'rational mind' he argued, which is confined in the brain yet can extend much further than ocular vision, via its ability of thought.

This internal/external perception reflected a broader dichotomy between man's spiritual nature (internus homo) versus his worldly nature (homo externus). This divide, so present in Swedenborg's later theology and Pietism in general, was already present in *Oeconomia Regni Animalis*. Swedenborg described a constant fight between the internal man and the external (§323, II). Yet there is also a legitimate telos to bodily urges which should not be unreasonably repressed. In line with Malebranche's *De Veritate* which he quotes in his notebook, Swedenborg regards pleasures as an 'instinct of nature'.[180] 'Cupidities and pleasures are harmless in themselves' (§324, II). Tastiness exists as a means to foster nourishment of the body; sexual desire descends from an innocent desire of the soul to multiply; parental love is a means to protect one's offspring; anger exists as a form of zeal to defend the truth, ambition to take one towards the higher spheres etc. (§324, II).

For instance, amending his previous iatromechanist statements about the spheric form of the soul, he now contended that the post-mortem form of the soul must undeniably be human shaped (§351, II). Since the telos of the body is to 'undergo death', so the soul can, 'like a phoenix', live in the higher worlds (§283, II). The body is the 'determination' of the soul in the natural world, hence when it dies the soul finds itself deprived of the power to put its forces into action (§284, II). Nevertheless, the body is the ultimate

[180] *Notebook*, p. 333.

organic form of the soul (§283, II) for which it serves as an 'earthly loan', echoing the classical trope of Plato's *Timaeus*.[181] As a result, Swedenborg also argued the soul must possess characteristics which do not make it subject to the relative and incarnated notions of space nor time (§352, II). Outlining his future distinction between time and duration in the spiritual world, Swedenborg now claimed that departed souls must meet by 'consociation' in the afterlife, a process governed by love-based sympathies which echoed his earlier harmonic tremulation research.[182] The details underpinning such processes he claimed, would tentatively be exposed later in his prospective algebraic anatomical language, a promise, which as we will see in the third chapter, would never be fulfilled.[183] The question of human memory was also explored, foreshadowing his later view that inner memory shapes one's appearances in the afterlife. Human memory is not copied, nor painted over the soul as a tabula rasa from birth, but rather impressed as 'external' memory on the fibres of the whole body (§297, II). Despite such perishable union, memory loss is a mere transitory state, as illustrated by resurgences of long forgotten memories (§359, II). The doctrine that memories are never truly erased was later developed in his *Arcana Coelestia* as man's '*Liber Vitae*', a record of man's internal memory used after death for judgment, mentioned in Revelation 20:12.[184]

7) The theological soul: on miracles, Church Fathers, breathing, influx, and triunity

Swedenborg was a devout man, who never discussed anatomy outside of a religious apologetic programme he had first outlined in *De Infinito* (1734). Even in his highly technical *De Cerebro* manuscript, he could not resist discussing theological issues, such as the question of free will or the purpose of terrestrial existence as a preparation for

[181] Plato, *Timée et Critias*, p. 95.
[182] *De Cerebro*, II, §228:97.
[183] *OERA*, §353-4, II, p. 347. On Swedenborg's consociations of souls in the afterlife, see Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, pp. 10-1.
[184] AC, §2474.

heavenly societies. In De *Cerebro's* first transaction, he made his first use of *correspondentia*, a term first coined by Aquinas in his *De Veritate*, which in *De Cerebro* qualified the potencies of the soul as 'correspondentially' existing in the spherules of the cortical substance (§38).[185]

Similarly, he analyzed all bodily functions through their broader spiritual telos in line with Descartes's concept of underlying first causes (§1194).[186] Such considerations foreshadowed his second early theological manuscript composed in Rome, the eight-pages long *De Fide et bonis operibus* (1739) written in mind with the Catholic conversion of the Swedish Queen Christina who had renounced the Swedish throne (allegedly under the influence of Descartes) to live in Rome.[187] *De Fide* developed *De Cerebro*'s rudimentary theology by delving further on the nature of free will and faith.[188] It became clear in this manuscript that Swedenborg now fiercely rejected *sola fide,* thus embracing a 'theology of works' which placed him as part of the heretical Pietists of his home country, which Jacob Benzelius had denounced at the funeral of Swedenborg's own father in 1735.

Swedenborg's theological questioning in Rome and Amsterdam must have been significant, for it led him to make important doctrinal changes in his *Oeconomi Regni Animalis*, a work in which he developed his theology more than anywhere before, including his first use of Scripture quotes to illustrate epistemic points.[189] Based on John 20:29, he argued that faith is needed in spite of lacking evidence, since God is the source of all intelligences (Cor. 12:4-6). The Lord is not only never far away: it is the duty of every Christian to seek God (Cor. 12:4-6, Acts 17:18-34) against the sinful men of the

[185] For an analysis of the term *correspondentia* back to Aquinas, see James F. Lawrence, 'Correspondentia, a neologism by Aquinas attains its zenith in Swedenborg', *Correspondences* 5 (2017) p. 42.
[186] Life as the seminary for heaven is further found in *OERA*, §348, II, §364, II, §366, II.
[187] Ryder, I, p. 425.
[188] *Faith and Good works* in Acton, *Psychological transactions*, §3, p. 11.
[189] See also 336, II). Swedenborg quoted John 20: 29, Cor. 12:4-6, Acts 17:18-34 and 2 Tim. 3.

last days who will stand in the way of all truths (2 Tim. 3). This last quote (which concluded his *Oeconomia Regni Animalis*) not only tackled Swedenborg's detractors, but also revealed how his eschatological views arose much earlier than previously thought by scholars. Indeed, by 1740, Swedenborg already saw the world as nearing the end times, the point in history where all truths would be revealed. As we will see, he would later claim to have witnessed the apocalypse in the spiritual world by 1757, the year Sweden declared war against Russia and entered the global Seven Years war (1756-1763).[190] Scripture is a set of rules which leads to achieve this end by detailing the means (§366, II), only appearing obscure to the people blinded by self-love (§366, II).

In *Oeconomia Regni Animalis*, Swedenborg still subscribed to natural theological ideas influenced by Hugo Grotius's *De Veritate Religionis Christinae* (§237, II) and Wolff's *Cosmologia* (§235.2, II). These ideas showcase Swedenborg's positioning towards the place of the divine, life and nature while rejecting potential accusations of materialism:

> Life is one thing, and nature another. 2. Nature in respect to life is dead. 3. Life is what regards ends, but nature what promotes ends by effects. 4.Hence that there is an intelligent being who governs nature suitably to ends.[191]

Swedenborg distinguished between inferring the existence of God from the observation of nature and the materialist worship of nature itself. He had nothing but hard words for the latter, referring to the 'worshipers of nature' as being 'insane' (§259, II). Matter cannot think (§232: II). The sole principle of life and motion is God (§231: II), and the soul, purest fluid in nature, is the instrumental cause of divine life into the world (§240: II). Swedenborg also affirmed that the purest fluid of the soul is not alive (§231: II), although he seemed to contradict this statement at various points across the treatise.[192]

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[190] See UJ.

[191] *OERA*, §234, II.

[192] In an apparent contradiction with §231, II ('*the spiritual fluid is not alive'*), Swedenborg stated in §350, II that '[*the spiritual fluid] is the only substance in the body which lives'* p.342. Similary in §352, II: *[the spiritual fluid] is perfectly alive in all its singulars or individual parts',* p. 346. At the end of volume II, Swedenborg wrote that auras become alive in contact to the human soul, when they fulfill their function: *To what purpose are the auras,*

Because of such concerns with how an excessive use of physico-theology might lead to materialism, Swedenborg still excluded in *De Cerebro* any application of his philosophical research on the soul to theology:

> 'A philosophical analysis of this kind cannot, however, be extended to theology. For theology regards principally the union of the soul with God by means of love and the Mediator- a union which is the last and the first end of the whole of creation. But the limit of the analysis of which we now speak lies within nature'.[193]

In *Oeconomia Regni Animalis,* Swedenborg further invoked the authority of a (rather personal) list of 'Church Fathers' to prove that his anatomical 'spiritual fluid' was the long-described immortal human soul present within man (§356, II). Swedenborg used the term 'Church Fathers' in a rather loose sense: along widely accepted names such as Ambrose, Justin Martyr, Basil of Caesarea, the Christian apologete Lucius Lactantius (250-325) and Origen, he also included more heterodox outsiders such as Berber Platonist philosopher Lucius Apuleius (124-170, author of the initiation and magic story *Asinus Aureus*) and the Byzantine monk and philosopher Michael Psellus (1017-1078), famous for his criticisms of Chrysostom.[194] Among these Church Fathers, Swedenborg listed Apuleius (who had himself been extensively discussed by Augustine), Psellus, Origen, Ambrose, Basil, Justin Martyr, and Lactantius as believers in the natural corporeity of angelic bodies (356, II). Again accommodating Augustine's thought to his ideas, Swedenborg presented Augustine as a Church Father who regarded souls as 'clothed' with a 'body composed of air', although what the bishop of Hippo 'really meant' was that the soul was clothed with a body made of a 'purer aura' similar to the spiritual fluid (§356, II). For Swedenborg, Gregory and Damascen held a middle position

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with their modifications, unless to minister corresponding sensations in the animal kingdoms? In themselves, they are but mediate or instrumental causes, and dead things, but as soon as they enter the animal kingdoms, they begin to live', §364, II, p. 354.

[193] *De Cerebro* §605, p. 341.

[194] W. Hörandner, 'Literary Criticism in 11th-Century Byzantium: Views of Michael Psellos on John Chrysostom's Style', *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, 2(3) (1996) pp. 336-44.

on the matter, summarised as corporeal in relationship to God, yet incorporeal in relationship to man (§356, II). Finally, among the Church Fathers who discarded the idea of an angelic physical body, Swedenborg listed Dionysius the Aeropagite (whose complex angelic hierarchy he completely discarded), Philo Judaeus (on whom his brother-in-law Eric Benzelius was a specialist), Athanasius, Chrysostom and Aquinas. Swedenborg stated that despite these different positions, it is agreed 'by all in modern times' that the soul shall survive under a purer form, freed from a former carnal body (§356, II).

Reacting to the Roman Catholic doctrine of miracles while living in Rome, he also now contested the possibility of contemporary miracles altogether, in stark contrast with views previously expressed in his *De Cerebro*. In *De Cerebro,* Swedenborg had contended that the restored prelapsarian state is indeed of miraculous nature, which Swedenborg urged the reader not to question, especially since 'when we ourselves are full of miracles' and 'all things are utterly obsequious to the Infinite Willing' (§1201). In his *De Cerebro* manuscript, Swedenborg had written that nature compels faith from the observer of the artful bodily machinery, much like witnessing miracles. However, after his stay in Rome, Swedenborg changed his view drastically. Miracles he now wrote, had been removed and hidden for this age just like the visible presence of angels or the spiritual bodies of the dead. Such a removal he argued allowed for the emergence of free will and of a rational faith from within (§323, II).

In a later unpublished manuscript *De Miraculis* (1750s), he would affirm in a dispensationalist fashion that 'there can be no faith through miracles since they represent external compulsions to believe, incompatible with the growth of a rational faith from

within, which is a typical feature of the current age of the Church. [195] As a result, Swedenborg even dismissed most of the 'magical miracles' performed in 'Chaldea', 'Egypt' and 'among the gentiles' as performed 'through artificial means or jugglery', while the many false miracles still performed today he argued, are nothing but deceptions.[196] In contrast to his later follower-turned-staunch critic Immanuel Kant who famously wrote in 1787 that he had to 'deny knowledge.to leave room for faith', by 1740 Swedenborg felt compelled to deny miracles in order to leave room for faith.[197] These views were of course not only doctrinal points amending various theological beliefs which emerged within his soul-body research: as we will see, they also formed the bedrock of his upcoming messianic ambitions, and we can note that Swedenborg would often refer to the spiritual gifts granted to him by God as a miracle.

Oeconomia Regni Animalis also marked Swedenborg's conception of the soul as a receptable for the influx of life (§245:II, §292, II, §315, II), also referred as the 'copulative influx of God' (§352, II). He had made his first reference to the term in *De Cerebro*'s second transaction (§599) as a neo-Platonic concept used to explain 'the mode for organs of one degree to communicate with another'.[198] 'Influx' is used again in §673 to refer to the spread and circulation of the *spiritus animales* in line with quotations in his philosophical notebook from Bilfinger's *De System Influxus* in *De Harmonia animi et corporis humani commentatio* (1735) and from Wolff's *Psychologia Rationalis*.[199] Swedenborg would later use the concept to analogically describe the flow of divine love into man's soul and through all creation, in a fashion much redolent of Georg

[195] See the posthumous manuscript on the subject, initially written as a section at the end of chapter 22 of the first volume of *Arcana Coelestia* (1749). The manuscript has been edited as E. Swedenborg, *De Miraculis / On Miracles and Signs*, Latin-English edition by P.H. Johnson (ed.) (London, 1943). See particularly §16-18.
[196] MI, §11, §16, §17.
[197] J. P. Mackey, 'Making Room for Faith: the Gospel according to Kant', *The Maynooth Review*, 1(3) Jun. (1977), p. 20-37.
[198] For a definition of influx in Swedenborg's theology, see *Lexicon*, p. 212.
[199] *Notebook*, pp. 188-95.

Stiernhielm's *Filosofiska fragment* (1655).[200] This selective terminological analysis reveals Swedenborg's tendency to transpose anatomical concepts into theological ones, and vice versa.

In *De Cerebro,* Swedenborg claimed to have discovered that the brain and cranial bones are in a motion analogous to respiration and synchronised with the lungs (§213).[201] Such an idea later proved influential on the founding fathers of osteopathic medicine Andrew Taylor Still (1828-1917) and William Garner Sutherland (1873-1954).[202] The *spherulae* of the brain are in a cycle of perpetual expansion and constriction (§86) which reflects on the cerebrum as a whole (§206-213). In its expansion, the cerebrum is stopped by the cranial bones. When such a state is reached, the increasing tension on the various parts of the brain triggers a 'retreat' which brings back the whole brain to its initial state (§213). This return to pre-expansion is possible thanks to the action of the *spiritus animales,* which confer fluidity to the various juices and elasticity to the fibres (§213). In the line of Cartesian iatromechanics, Swedenborg attributed the source of this expansion to the internal volitions of the soul, which 'animate' the whole body via the movement of the brain (§213, 215). In follow-up works on the brain, Swedenborg would later describe the motion or respiration of the brain as 'the first in order' while lung respiration comes as the last.[203]

In *Oeconomia,* he linked this vital influx to respiration, which Swedenborg described similarly to his *De Cerebro* as happening in the brain and commanding the respiration of the lungs. Expansion and constriction of the brain in a respiratory movement is evidenced

[200] J. Nordström *'*Georg Stiernhielms filosofiska fragment*'* in *Samlade Skrifter av Georg Stiernhielm*, 2(1) (Uppsala, 1924). For an account of the literary and alleged genealogical relationship between Swedenborg and Stiernhielm, see Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 19. See also Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 477.
[201] See also D. Fuller, *Osteopathy and Swedenborg: the influence of Emanuel Swedenborg on the genesis and development of Osteopathy, especially of Andrew Taylor Still and William Garner Sutherland*. (Bryn Athyn, 2012), p. 306.
[202] Fuller, *Osteopathy*.
[203] *The Brain* I, p. 53, *OERA*, I, p. 283.

by the spaces present in the brain which allow constrictions and expansion to take place (§297, II). This breathing of the brain sustains the influx of life through the whole body, echoing Genesis 2:7, 'He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul'.[204] Scholars have long been fascinated by Swedenborg's own experiences of apnoeic breath-retention, which he claimed to have practised from an early age as a way to feel closer to God and the angels, and which for him pointed to the existence of a divine 'inner breath' present within man.[205] In recordings of his later *experientiae spirituales*, Swedenborg wrote in 1743 that he had been seized by a 'deliquium', a purifying episode similar to another one experienced 'seven years ago' in Amsterdam, when he first began to write his *Oeconomia*.[206] Swedenborg instinctively tended to hold his breath during long episodes of concentration since childhood, while as a theologian with prophetic claims he later recorded how his breath would sometimes stop during sleep, or how he could allegedly hold his breath up to an hour, sustaining himself only through the inner breath.[207]

More broadly, detailed study of Swedenborg's various models of the soul highlights a persistent alignment with his metaphysical hierarchies: in *Oeconomia Regni Animalis*, the fourfold scale 'soul-mind-animus-five sense' reflects the fourfold auras of the universe 'universal-magnetic-ether-air' outlined earlier in his *Principia*. This quaternary model coexisted with internal ternary subdivisions, echoing Augustine's triunity: the one soul has 'three determinations' within the body, manifested as organ parts (the mind corresponds to the cortical substance, the animus to the brain, and the body to the sensory organs, §284, II). Such alignments represented a distinct feature of Swedenborg's thought

[204] For Swedenborg's exegesis of this passage, see AC, §3623.
[205] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 17. See also Benz, *Visionary Savant*, p. 21.
[206] Bergquist, *Diary*, §282. For a commentary of this entry, see Lamm, *Development*, p. 62.
[207] Lamm, *Development*, pp. 62-3.

and persisted in his later theology, where the threefold structure of the *mens* (natural-spiritual-celestial).

Chapter III

On cerebral anatomy, madness, sleep and prophecy (1740-1743)

Introduction

This chapter covers the intensive 1740-1743 period in Swedenborg's life and research. The first two years (1740-1741) marked the publication of his first and most important anatomical work *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* (1740-1741, analyzed in the previous chapter) but also professional recognition in his home country, growing spiritual concerns, and constant private introspection and research. During this period, Swedenborg worked and stayed for nine months in Holland, before returning to Sweden and taking his seat at the newly-created Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences. At the same time, the country entered a disastrous war with Russia, led by the Hat government of his old ally Carl Gyllenborg. While paying attention to his work, ideas and influences during those years, the chapter also explores his political and scholarly networks within the broader political context at the time.

Swedenborg's manuscripts provide a complex window into his intellectual and theological development. In contrast to received views, they indicate an earlier theological 'turn' (as early as 1740), reinforced by a desire to pursue his soul-body research after the failure of his mathesis universalis. They also reveal deep anxieties related to his soul-body efforts and increasing concerns for spiritual matters, the nature of revealed knowledge along with the ultimate spiritual purpose of his work. The chapter also shows how those manuscripts challenge long-standing narratives about his mental agency, demonstrating the wide extent of Swedenborg's interest, observations and self-experiments regarding the nature of sleep and dreams, along with his fine-grained

attempts to distinguish between divine signs, delusions of the imagination and various forms of insanity. While revising those historiographical accounts, the chapter finally shows how Swedenborg's work was strongly guided by a desire for spiritual growth, coupled to a need to elucidate whether the personal and working struggles arising from his soul-body research represented a long process of spiritual purification for which he had been chosen since birth. By doing so, the chapter not only redraws the picture of the first phase of his famous 'transitional period', but also provides a fresh study of how these early drafts paved the way for the next developments of his soul-body doctrines in contrast to the dominant soul-body systems at the time.

I. The year 1740: stay in Holland and return to Sweden (September 1740)

1) Allies in Amsterdam: publishing context of *Oeconomia Regni Animalis*, meetings with Preis and correspondence with Desaguliers

On 27 December 1739, the 51-year-old Swedenborg recorded in Amsterdam how he finished writing the two volumes of his *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* at exactly 12 o'clock.[1] During his stay in Amsterdam, he personally oversaw the printing process of the work by the famous French Huguenot publisher François Changuion, whose catalogue ranged from Pierre Bayle's *Dictionnaire historique* to Leibniz's *Theodicée*. Swedenborg had chosen Changuion for his reputation, his international distribution (Changuion had two bookshops, in Amsterdam and London) and his personal acquaintance with the 74-year-old Swedish ambassador in the Hague Joachim Preis, an old ally and friend of Swedenborg since 1713.[2]

[1] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 130.
[2] Teresa di Paola, *Changuion*, pp. 41-2.

Oeconomia Regni Animalis would be Swedenborg's first published anatomical work, showcasing his mature soul-body programme outlined in his *De Infinito* in 1734. The title of the book situates this study of the soul in a fashionable Dutch genre: from the seventeenth until the first half of the eighteenth century, an *Oeconomia Animalis* was a particular kind of anatomical treatise typically associated with the Dutch cartesian school of anatomy and mechanistic physiology.[3] The genre also featured vitalist traits grounded in neo-atomistic revival, a fibrillary emphasis on anatomical structures and a strong interest in the study of life-preserving processes.[4] These characteristics all fitted Swedenborg's work, to which he added an extensive focus on the nature and telos of the human soul.

Oeconomia Regni Animalis was the first part of what eventually became a five-volume series of anatomical works focusing on the nature of the soul, published over five years (1740-1745). Many changes of plans and structure resulted in setbacks and compromises between Swedenborg's ambitions and what he achieved in practice during the period. The *Oeconomia*'s first edition was sold both in Amsterdam and at Changuion's central London shop in the Strand, and Swedenborg chose to release the first edition anonymously, signing them *ab Aphaneide*, 'by an unknown person'.[5] The practice of releasing anonymous first prints in Amsterdam was a widespread convention, usually motivated by a variety of reasons related to the nature of the works published. In Swedenborg's case, the prime motivation was likely cautiousness, stemming from the context surrounding the book's publication. In Sweden, Swedenborg had been granted leave from the king on the promise to publish a metallurgical follow-up to his mining series *Opera Mineralia* (1734), despite the fact that he had been privately working on

[3] S. Gaukroger, ed. E. Booth, *A Subtle and mysterious machine: the medical world of Walter Charleton*, (Dordrecht, 2005), pp. 82-7.
[4] Gaukroger, *Walter Charleton*, p. 83.
[5] Ryder I, p. 428.

anatomy for almost five years.[6] Breaking such a promise to publish a two-volume anatomical work on the human soul was a risky move, but Swedenborg estimated that the non-metallurgical focus of his new publication would be easily forgiven if it met with critical success. The work could then be advertised as enhancing the prestige of Swedish scholarship abroad, a tactic Swedenborg had used several times to get to publish what he wanted.[7]

Despite Swedenborg's confidence, significant costs and risks had been taken to publish the *Oeconomia*, and there was an undeniable pressure for the book to be successful. Leaving nothing to chance, Swedenborg sought to increase its positive reception by anonymously producing a twenty-page long review in *Acta Eruditorum Lipsiensia* which summarised his doctrines with little criticism and acknowledged the author was 'well known to be the well-born assessor Emanuel Swedenborg'.[8] The work was further reviewed in *Neue Zeitungen von Gelehrten Sachen* in Leipzig on 6 February 1741 and in another Leipzig review, *Zuberlässige Nachrichten*, in August 1741, with mixed to positive reactions.[9] Swedenborg deemed the book's overall reception satisfactory, and as a result republished the treatise under his own name as soon as 1742.[10]

Apart from ambassador Joachim Preis, the most prominent supporter of Swedenborg's new anatomical efforts would be the president of the Royal Society, Martin Folkes (1690-1754). The Royal Society had presented a rather favourable review of Swedenborg's *Principia* in 1737, and Folkes held positive views about Swedenborg's anatomical works, later buying (or perhaps directly receiving from Swedenborg) the *Oeconomia*'s sequel *Regnum Animale* (1744-1745) and its follow-up doctrinal poem *De Cultu et Amore Dei*

[6] For Swedenborg's application for leave to the king, see Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 478.
[7] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 478.
[8] *Acta Eruditorum Lipsiensia*, (Charleston, 2011), year 1742, pp. 642-63. For the claim that Swedenborg wrote the review himself, see Helander, *Oeconomia I*, I.3 'the evaluation of posterity', p. 13.
[9] Ryder, I, p. 430.
[10] See Ryder, I, pp. 429-31.

(London, 1745).[11] Folkes's Swedish networks and interest in Scandinavian scholarship later earned him a seat as one of the first foreign members of the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences on 3 May 1747.[12]

While the printing process of his *Oeconomia* began slowly at the beginning of 1740, in February Swedenborg paid a visit in the Hague to his old ally Joachim Preis. Preis encouraged Swedenborg to travel to England during the printing of his *Oeconomia* to meet with members of the Royal Society and to submit them a clean copy of his extensive *De Cerebro* manuscript on the brain. Preis further suggested a meeting in London with the Huguenot natural philosopher Johann Theophilus Desaguliers, to report back on the progress of the latter's translation of his *Course of experimental philosophy* (London, 1734) into French, also set for publication by Changuion.[13] However, Swedenborg kept no records of such a trip, and a 'Latin manuscript sent from Sweden' examined by the Royal Society on 14 May 1740 suggests that Swedenborg instead chose to send a clean copy of his manuscript while remaining in Amsterdam, and later met Desaguliers there.[14]

During his residence in Amsterdam in the year 1740, Swedenborg actively worked on five new manuscripts: his long-overdue algebraic mathesis universalis of the soul, some synthetic excerpts on his corpuscular philosophy, various additional notes on the brain, a personal index to the second volume of his *Oeconomia* and finally, a prospective third *Oeconomia* volume about cerebral membranes and diseases of the mind: *De Fibra, de*

[11] Martin Folkes possessed a copy of both Swedenborg's *Regnum Animale* (vol. 1 and 2 in *Catalogue*, pp. 18/168. Quarto section, number 341 | vol. 3 pp. 11/168. Quarto section, number 79) and *De Cultu et Amore Dei* (pp. 21/168. Quarto section, number 459).
[12] Apart from Swedenborg's works, Folkes also owned a copy of Rudbeck's *Atlantica* (*Catalogue*, pp. 82/168, Folio section, number 2566) and a 1740 edition of Linnaeus's *Systema Naturae* (*Catalogue*, pp. 131/168, Octavo et Infra section, number 4154).
[13] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 486. See also Preis's letter to Desaguliers, announcing the possible coming of Swedenborg to London, in Schuchard, *Secret Agent*, p. 297.
[14] For reference to the manuscript from Sweden sent to the Royal Society, see Schuchard, *Secret Agent*, p. 298. Schuchard argues that Swedenborg visited London during the period, but as no records apart from Preis's letter exist, such a travel seems unlikely. For reference to Swedenborg meeting Desaguliers in Amsterdam, see Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 486-7.

Tunica arachnoidea, deque Morbis fibrarum. Having extensively focused on the content of *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* in the previous chapter, we now turn to selected aspects of these manuscripts in order to examine the next steps of Swedenborg's intellectual and religious development through the lens of soul-body interaction.

2) *Philosophia universalium Characteristica et Mathematica* (1740): Swedenborg's attempt towards a universal anatomical algebra.

By 1740, Swedenborg had been promising for five years an algebra-based 'mathesis universalis' applied to anatomy: a new science, crossing anatomical data and algebraic computation, which would mathematically reveal the anatomical attributes of the soul. In his *Oeconomia* and brain manuscripts, Swedenborg's dearth of empirical evidence about the soul had been explained away by the future promise to develop such an evidential system. As discussed in the second chapter, such a project more broadly related to the widespread eighteenth-century search for universal languages. Swedenborg's project on the matter was particularly influenced by the works of Christian Wolff and Leibniz, through whom the concept of mathesis universalis had acquired a different meaning from that common in the seventeenth century.[15] In his *Mathematisches Lexicon* (1716), Wolff had offered a history of the term which culminated with Leibniz's view in his *Acta Eruditorum* (1691) of the mathesis universalis as a sort of 'universal science' applied to the mathematization of nature via the use of the algebraic '*ars combinatoria*'.[16] Swedenborg's long-promised version followed this mixture of loose definition and ambitious goals, yet in a narrower way: his *Philosophia universalium Characteristica et Mathematica* specifically aimed at using infinitesimal calculus to formalise the understanding of human physiology at all levels. This led Swedenborg to hope that, by establishing mathematical equivalences, such a language would be able to reveal

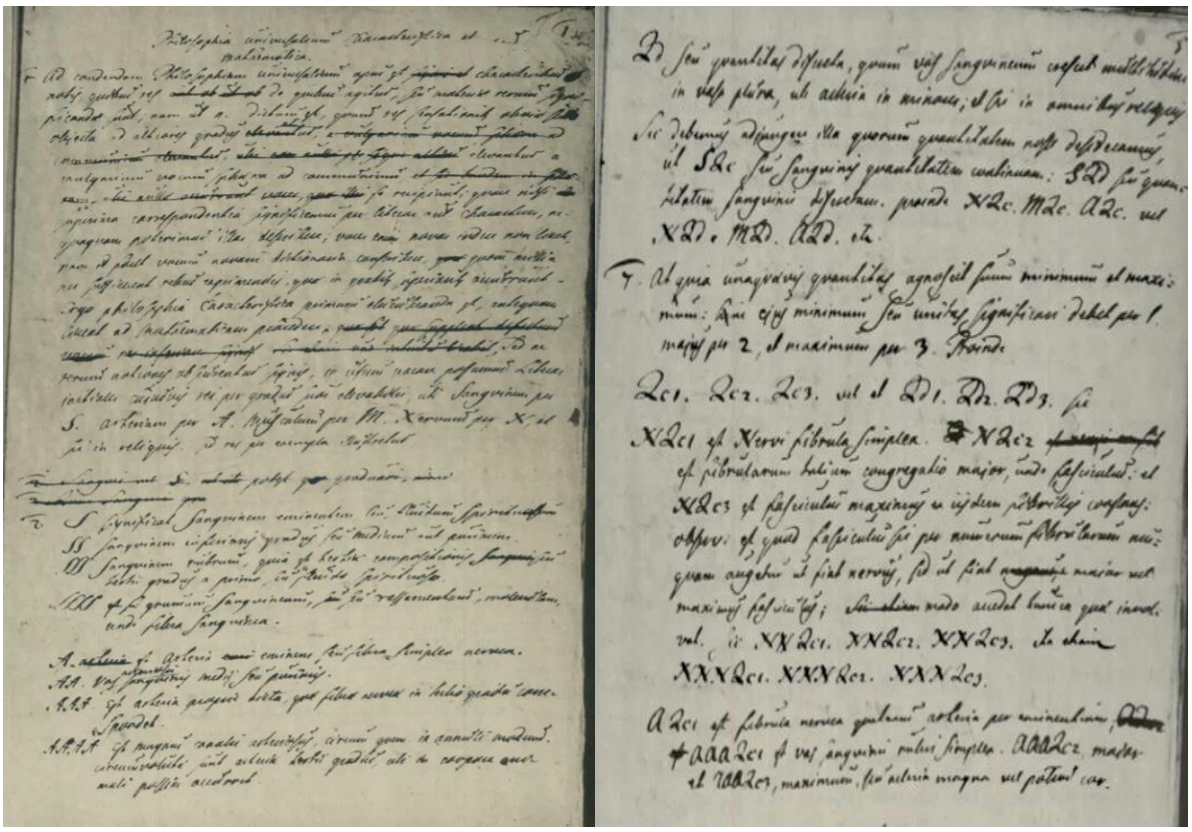
[15] D. Rabouin, *Mathesis Universalis: l'idée de mathématique universelle d'Aristote à Descartes* (Paris, 2015).
[16] C. Wolff, *Mathematisches Lexicon* (Leipzig, 1716), pp. 869-70.

algebraic patterns from the grosser level of organs to the most minimal elements of the body, ultimately proving the existence of the soul.[17]

Another inspiration for Swedenborg in this venture was John Wilkins's *An Essay towards a real character and a philosophical language* (1668). An early reader of Wilkins during his formative Grand Tour in London, Oxford and Paris, Swedenborg's early manuscripts indicate that he was probably aware of Wilkins's 'thesaurus' as a first step towards a universal language.[18] Wilkins's system was intended to lead both to an alphabet and an algebra of human thought, a venture usually associated with members of the 'Invisible College' in London and Oxford, and now seen as forerunners of the Royal Society. Building on his previous mathematical training from his early years in Paris, Swedenborg's eight-page manuscript shows how he sought to adapt this idea to his soul-body quest, by attributing algebraic letters to organs and fluids to tentatively combine them to form synthetic sentences (see Figure 13).

[17] Ryder I, p. 444. Codex 57, m.1-8, pp 1a-3a, quarto.
[18] For Swedenborg's praise of and influence by Wilkins, see Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 30. For the list of Swedenborg's early inventions that were influenced by Wilkins, see Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 57-8.

FIGURE 13 : Swedenborg's *Philosophia Universalium*, Codex 57. On the left, the S, SS, SSS, SSSS, and A, AA, AAA, AAAA series. On the right, the Qc, Qc1/Qd1 etc. Lithographic reproduction, vol. 6, pp. 265-269 (1869). The Swedenborg Society.



Nevertheless, Swedenborg's system rapidly faced a series of insurmountable issues. First, he conceded that his notation system generated multiple redundancies ('SS' designated the same fluid as 'Sa', etc.), which created confusion when trying to distinguish the mechanisms and nuances at stake.[19] Second, attempts to segregate every organ, fibre and fluid based on 'graded ordering' remained arbitrary and could hardly account with mathematical precision for fluids and organs with multiple functions. From this manuscript onwards until 1742, Swedenborg felt a growing sense of the impossibility of transposing anatomical data into algebraic language, a setback which meant that the long promised mathematical cornerstone of his science of the soul could not be achieved, or would have to be replaced by something else. As I will show, this eventually took place

[19] Stroh, *Treatises*, p. 167.

two years later, in the final section of a new unpublished manuscript of Wolffian inspiration, *Psychologia Rationalis* (1742), marking Swedenborg's decisive theological turn in his approach to the topic of the soul.

3) *Haec vera sunt quia signum habeo*: animal spirits and divine signs

During the same period, Swedenborg produced various additional notes to his brain manuscripts from 1736-1738. In these *Addenda* notes, Swedenborg engaged with the ambiguous question of the production of the animal spirits. Breaking his former silence on the topic, Swedenborg now claimed that the animal spirits must be produced in the *cerebellula* (viz. tiny brains within the brain, supposedly observed by boiling brain tissues for dissection) via a process of a process of subtle generation (*generatio eminens*) based on a relationship of 'representation'.[20] As seen in the previous chapter, Swedenborg's idiosyncratic anatomical concepts of 'representation' and 'correspondence' loosely characterised the relationship between the 'spiritual' soul and the 'physical' body. Both concepts would soon be repurposed in his new theological manuscripts to explain how spiritual realities become manifested into the grosser physical world, effectively forming the basis for his wider doctrine of incarnation.

Further evidence of Swedenborg's growing spiritual concerns at the time can be found in the manuscript summary of his corpuscular philosophy, *Philosophia Corpuscularis in Compendio*.[21] In this document, Swedenborg reviewed Leeuwenhoek's *Arcana Naturae Detecta* ('The secrets of nature revealed'), concluding his analysis with the laconic annotation *haec vera sunt quia signum habeo*, 'those things are true because I have the sign'.[22] Although the manuscript does not specify the nature of such a sign, comparison with his other works at the time suggest a growing belief in a divinely-guided sort of

[20] Codex 57, p. 24a. For an English translation, see Acton, *Psychologica*, p. 160.
[21] Ryder, I, p. 456.
[22] For the quote, see Swedenborg, Codex 57, pp. 45a, 45b, KVA. See Stroh, *Treatises*, p. 164 for an English translation. For an analysis of this quote, see Jonsson, *Visionary scientist*, pp. 65-7.

philosophical intuition, a notion he would further develop from 1743 to 1744. Swedenborg had already written in *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* about how the 'principles of our minds' are formed through divine 'signs', viz. clues in nature allowing to understand the divine through rational 'comparison'.[23] As we will see in the next section, the year 1740 marked a growing interest from Swedenborg about what personal divine signs are, and the possible biological basis behind receiving them.

II. Soul-body interaction and divine personal signs in the *De Fibra* manuscript (1740-1742)

1) The lost third volume of Swedenborg's *Oeconomia*: *De Fibra* and its scrapped sequel on divine providence

In Amsterdam, Swedenborg stated a first draft of the prospective third volume to his *Oeconomia* series: the 270 quarto pages-long *De Fibra, de Tunica arachnoidea, deque Morbis fibrarum,* which he continued to revise until 1742.[24] *De Fibra* explored the anatomy of brain fibres, the functions of the 'arachnoid tunic', and featured a remarkable third section on diseases, mental illnesses, sleep, trances and regimen, fashionable topics which were commonly treated side-by-side by proto-psychiatrists at the time.[25] The finished style and arrangement of the manuscript indicates that the work was prepared for publication, although no introduction or conclusion was actually written. In 1742, Swedenborg even announced its imminent publication in an inserted catalogue of the second edition of *Oeconomia Regni Animalis*.[26] However, by the time he came back for his second stay in Holland in 1743, his writing plans had changed again, and *De Fibra* was scrapped for good.

[23] *OERA*, II, p. 239, §254.
[24] Swedenborg planned and probably finished it in draft by the end of 1740, while a clear copy was refined and produced in 1741-1742. See Ryder, I, 474 and *De Fibra*, xxi-xxii.
[25] See for instance Roy Porter (ed), *George Cheyne, The English Malady (1733)* (London, 1991); A. Guerrini, *Obesity and depression during the Enlightenment: the life and times of George Cheyne* (Norman, 2000).
[26] Ryder, I, p. 486.

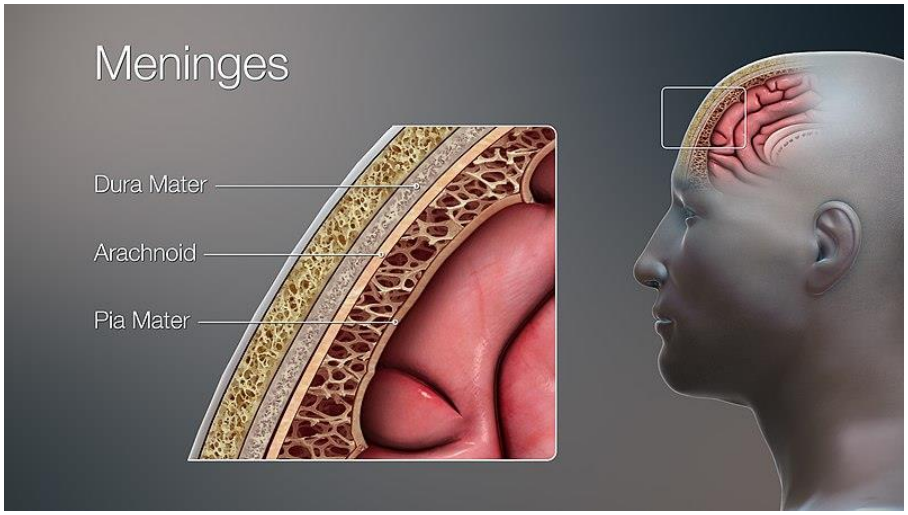
The manuscript was also meant to precede Swedenborg's first theological publication, titled *De Prudentia Divina, Praedestinatione, Fato, Fortuna & Prudentia Humana*, although this project also came to nothing for reasons that are unclear. The short work (no longer extant) was recorded in a highly favourable light in Swedenborg's early 'spiritual experience' from 1743, in which the supportive spirit of his late father Jesper praised *De Prudentia* as the 'finest' work Swedenborg had ever written.[27] This experience was interpreted by Emanuel as another sign, an encouragement to shift towards theology. As we have seen, Swedenborg's interest in and concern for theological matters had not only long been present: it was getting increasingly urgent and vivid. Hence, by the early 1740s he was struggling to reconcile anatomical ambitions with a growing interest in theology, both triggered by the desire to provide compelling answers to the soul-body interaction problem.

a) Cerebral fibres, doctrine of forms and the most subtle membrane containing the lymph of life: *spiritus animales* in *De Fibra*

As might be expected from the prospective third volume of *Oeconomia Regni Animalis*, *De Fibra* first provided extensive descriptions of the nature of the medullary substance, blood vessels and nerves. Swedenborg then explored in details the role of the arachnoid membrane, based mainly on accounts from the classic works of Ridley's *Anatomia Cerebri*, Heister's *Compendium Anatomicum*, Ruysch's *Epistolae*, Nuck's *Adenographia Curiosa* and the *Traité de la Teste* and *Exposition Anatomique* from his likely anatomy professor in Paris, the Dane Jacob Benignus Winsløw.[28]

[27] For reference to the title of this lost work, see *De Fibra*, xix. For reference to it being lost, see *The Fiber*, xxi. For the record of the spirit of Jesper, see Ryder, I, p. 486.
[28] See *De Fibra*, pp. 231-6; Ridley: §329, Heister: §332, Ruysch §334, Nuck §334a, Winsløw §330.

FIGURE 14 : Contemporary illustration of the meninges, including the arachnoid. Wikimedia Commons.



Swedenborg's interest in the arachnoid membrane stemmed both from his idea that the latter 'extended over the whole cerebrum' (§337, §340) and from his belief that it was the most delicate membrane in the body, a statement he borrowed from Ruysch (§344). The arachnoid also served a crucial function in relation to Swedenborg's animal spirits: this intermediary membrane restrains the pituitous liquor (§366) and separates the dura and pia mater, standing immerged in a subtle 'lubricating' lymphatic humor (§342, §351) which segregates the three membranes. It was this 'volatile' lymph (a Cartesian term, §356), also present in the cerebrum, which Swedenborg saw as 'commingled' with the animal spirits and irrigating the whole brain. Because of its partly spiritual nature, Swedenborg saw the lymph as essential to life, a property he inferred from observing its withdrawal into the arteries at the last moment before death (§352).

Swedenborg was now emphasizing the concept of form as key to understanding the nature of the soul (§289) at the expense of former explanations based on his elusive, discarded algebraic method. Quoting Plato and Aristotle (§268) in a long section on 'doctrine of forms', he referred to the soul as the 'essence' which lives not only in beasts and humans, but across all reigns or kingdoms (*regnum*) of nature and the whole universe

(§288). The term 'correspondence' was repeatedly used (§377-378) to describe the link between the troubles of the human soul, mind and animus, and their physical manifestation in the body, primarily through afflictions within the blood (§381). This view concerning the physiological basis for the troubles of the soul led to his new research on the nature of sleep, and the intoxications of the mind through madness, respiration and dietary regimen.

b) Self-experiments and Swedenborg's mechanistic model of sleep

Overall, Swedenborg's views on the soul closely matched what was already expressed in *Oeconomia Regni Animalis,* and the major contribution of *De Fibra* to his soul-body corpus lies in its extensive third part *Morbis Fibrarum*, the 'diseases of the fibre' which designate the 'pathologies of both the body and the animus' (§370), encompassing a large spectrum of mental states, from coma to sleep, wakefulness and folly. In contrast to Swedenborg's usual methodology, where he invoked numerous anatomical authorities, *Morbis Fibrarum* mentioned few sources. Swedenborg's voice was increasingly prominent throughout the 209 entries, often alluding to self-observations, hearsay and self-experiments. The section covers topics such as paralysis and apoplexy (§395), sleep, somnambulism, coma, lethargy, (§421), insomnia (§447), catalepsy (§448), epilepsy (§457), vertigo (§545), rabies (§540), mania, melancholy, tarantism and St Vitus dance (§473), memory loss (§518), 'fanatical imagination', nightmares (§534) hibernation and 'ecstatic trance' (§537).

During the early modern period, treatises on the nature of sleep were not uncommon, although contrasted views existed across the Protestant world about sleep and dreaming.[29] While most regarded sleep as a legitimate bodily need, theologians like Calvin associated

[29] A. Ryrie and J. Martin (eds.), *Private and Domestic Devotion in Early Modern Britain* (Farnham, 2012), pp. 73–92.

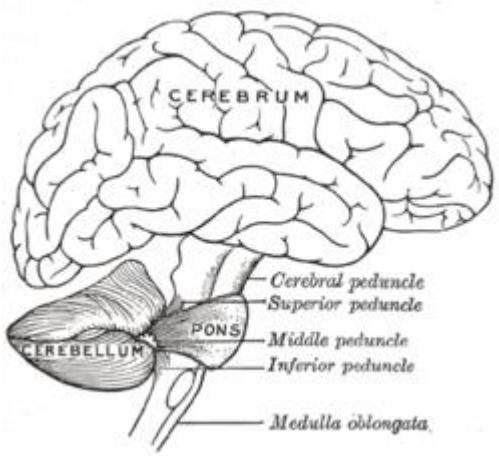
the inescapable urge to sleep as a sign of bodily corruption and enslavement to sin.[30] Calvin's view was rooted in the biblical distinction between rest (which is good) and sleep, commonly associated with death.[31] In stark contrast with such religious approaches, Enlightenment physicians commonly analyzed sleep as part of the six Galenic non-naturals.[32] In line with the physicians of his time, Swedenborg developed a fully mechanistic and 'secular' explanation for sleep, which he defined as 'the temporary death of voluntary actions and sensations' (§422), caused by everything which restricts blood flow to the cortex. This includes low tension, sexual activity (allegorically referred as 'Venus') and blood loss, along with everything which diminishes the excitement of the cerebrum: peace of mind, lassitude, fatigue (§428). The deeper the sleep, the less the degree to which red blood circulated in the cerebrum (§427).

More originally, Swedenborg further categorised sleep as a state where the cerebrum abandons control to the cerebellum, which in turns synchronises itself with pulmonary respiration (§421, §424). This takeover played an important role in his later dispensationalist theology, in which he affirmed that when humanity started lying, divine influx was diverted from the cerebellum into the cerebrum, leading to the gradual closure of men's spiritual senses.[33] Exploring Swedenborg's views about sleep further sheds new light on his self-recorded sleeping patterns, which famously amounted up to thirteen consecutive hours a night during his most intense periods of spiritual introspection.[34] Swedenborg argued that the higher cerebellum-controlled state of soul-body coordination could also be experienced consciously during the 'quite delightful' intermediate state of *cataphora*, *coma vigil* or *coma somnolentum*. Described as being neither asleep nor

[30] Ryrie, *Sleeping*, p. 74.
[31] Ryrie, *Sleeping*, pp. 73-4.
[32] J. Kennaway and R. Knoeff (eds.), *Lifestyle and Medicine in the Enlightenment: The Six Non-Naturals in the Long Eighteenth Century* (London, 2020).
[33] TE, §88.
[34] See Swedenborg's self-records of sleeping patterns in Bergquist, *Diary*, §45, §100.

awake (§440), such a state -- redolent of contemporary descriptions of hypnagogia -- was often alluded to by Swedenborg when recording his early *experientiae spirituales* from 1743-1744.

FIGURE 15 : Contemporary sketch highlighting the cerebrum and cerebellum parts of the brain. According to Swedenborg, during sleep the inmost cerebellum takes over, resulting in a state of superior coordination between the soul and the body. Illustrated by Henry Gray. Wikimedia Commons.



2) The question of dreams: on being a prophet, fanatical imagination, and the thoughts of angels

While Swedenborg provided an entirely mechanistic model for sleep, he paradoxically wrote no dedicated section in *De Fibra* on the nature of dreams. Indeed, his first references to dreams would only occur in his 1743-1744 diary, although he would overall continue to avoid using the term *dröm*.[35] Was Swedenborg reluctant to classify what he saw in his sleep as dreams? This does not seem implausible, considering the negative views commonly attached to dreams at the time.

During the seventeenth century, views which regarded dreams as messages of divine knowledge co-existed with works associating dreams to incontrollable disorderly

[35] Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 43.

thoughts, irrationality, madness and enthusiasm.[36] Dreaming was generally regarded with suspicion in the Protestant world, and at odds with ideals to self-discipline one's thoughts.[37] Although favourable treatises such as Philip Goodwin's *Mystery of Dreams historically discoursed* (1658) and Thomas Tryon's *Treatise of dreaming and visions* (1684) regarded dreams as legitimate introspective pathways to spiritual knowledge, actually stemming from the nocturnal activity of the unbound soul, these represented a minority.[38] Moreover, on theological grounds the waning spiritual credit of dreams as messages from God had long been contrasted with scripture passages like in Deuteronomy 13:5, where claims of divinely-inspired dreams were cast as deceitful visions and equated with false prophets who deserved to be slain.[39]

Such scepticism was not new: since antiquity, the veridical quality of dreams had long been contested as stemming from the deceptive nature of the senses.[40] Even ancient authorities who saw dreams as inspired by various entities were reluctant to assign them with a divine origin: Aristotle had for instance long denied that dreams were divinely-sent, contending there is always a kind of 'demonic nature' which presides over the 'things which appear in sleep'.[41] In line with Democritus, Plato had further contended that dreams were to be placed along priestcraft, sorcery and soothsaying, under the command of the' demonic principle between man and the divine'.[42] Hence, from the middle of the seventeenth century to the middle of the eighteenth century, dreaming in the British Isles gradually disappeared from the realm of theological discussion, in favour

[36] M. G. Hay, *Understanding Madness: some approaches to mental illness circa 1650-1800* (PhD thesis, University of York, 1979) pp. 107-8. See also L. Dacome, 'To what purpose does it think: dreams, sick bodies and confused minds in the Age of Reason,' *History of Psychiatry*, 15 (2004), p. 396.
[37] Ryrie, *Sleeping*, p. 75.
[38] Hay, *Madness*, p. 109.
[39] Ryrie, *Sleeping*, p. 74.
[40] J. M. Windt., 'Dreams and Dreaming' in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2021 edition), E. N. Zalta (ed.), section 1.2.
[41] B. Byden, 'Nikephoros Gregoras' Commentary on Synesius De Insomniis, in *On Prophecy, Dreams and Human Imagination, Synesius, De insommniis*, D. A. Russell and H. G. Nesselrath (eds.) (Tubingen, 2014). p. 178.
[42] Byden, *De Insomniis*, p. 73.

of increasingly physiological and materialistic understandings which often identified madness as akin to 'wakeful dreaming'.[43] Both the divinely-inspired and rational nature of dreams were strongly contested by influent seventeenth century figures such as Thomas Hobbes, Hugo Grotius, Joseph Mede and John Locke.[44] Hobbes regarded dreams as 'nothing but the residues of sensations and ideas' already experienced, while Henry More claimed in his *Enthusiasmus Triumphatus* (1662) that delirious madmen were basically unable to distinguish dreams from reality.[45] This seventeenth century movement of oneirocriticism grew stronger in the eighteenth century, as it became shared by prominent scholars such as Isaac Newton and Etienne Bonnot de Condillac, as well as proto-psychiatric physicians such as George Cheyne, David Hartley and Thomas Beddoes.[46]

The situation appears to have been quite different in Pietistic Sweden, where dream interpretation continued to be practiced as a legitimate method of spiritual introspection and divination much longer than in central Europe and the British Isles. In reaction to this persistence, Linnaeus privately denounced in his *Nemesis Divina* the political risks stemming from reckless statements made through clairvoyant dreaming.[47] Linnaeus remained sceptical of their veracity, denouncing instead the genuine panic and threats which they might cause amongst credulous people. Swedenborg seemed to have been much more open-minded than his cousin on the topic, although his reluctance to use the term 'dream' in either Latin or Swedish suggests his awareness of the tensions surrounding the topic. Swedenborg's discussions of dreams and visions at the time appear cautiously split between three different manuscripts: *De Morbis Fibrarum* (1740-1742), his philosophical notebook (1741-1744), and a text now known as the Scheringson

[43] Hay, *Madness* pp. 110 and 112.
[44] Iliffe, *Priest*, p. 235 and Hay *Madness*, p. 110.
[45] Hay, *Madness*, p. 108.
[46] Iliffe, *Priest*, p. 235. See also Hay, *Madness*, pp. 111-2.
[47] M. J. Petry, *Nemesis Divina by Carl von Linné*, M. J. Petry (ed.) (Dordrecht, 2001), pp. 191-2.

manuscript (1743-1744).[48] Multiple pieces of evidence point to a close interplay between these three works.[49] The crucial lesson for our study is that Swedenborg sought to balance sceptical accounts denying the divine nature of dreams with less sceptical assessments, and he explored whether signs sent to him might actually be evidence that he was chosen as a divinely-elected prophet. This is reflected in his later notebook citations, for instance from Numbers 12:6, where the divine is said to reveal itself to prophets in visions and to speak to them in dreams; from Plato's *Phaedrus* where mania was described as divinely-inspired, and from *Timaeus* where it is the prophet's prudent duty to understand the meaning of signs during visions, either in sleep or full wakefulness.[50]

While he recorded having received instructions about the structure of his *De Sensu Communi* (unpublished, 1744) in a 'dream', Swedenborg's mature doctrine of dreams as insights inspired by either demonic or angelic spirits would only be finalised a year later in his manuscript *Historia Veteris Testamenti* (1745-1747).[51] In this unreleased work, he strikingly redefined dreams as 'the thoughts of angels transformed via correspondences'.[52] In a stark contrast with his formerly reluctant use of the term, Swedenborg now distinguished between three categories of 'dreams', each induced by three different kind of spirits.[53] The first and highest category, either premonitory or disclosing spiritual truths, consisted of dreams directly induced by 'God Messiah' himself.[54] The second category included 'all the other dreams', induced by spirits and

[48] See *Introduction* in which I argue for the need to rename the 'Dream Diary' into the more neutral 'Scheringson manuscript'.
[49] For instance, the quotes from Aristotle and Plato in *De Fibra* are all drawn from the philosophical notebook, and the categorization of visions in *De Morbis Fibrarum* were extended from three to five in the Scheringson manuscript. Self-criticisms of Swedenborg's vanity and discouragement about his work in *De Fibra* §526 are echoed in Bergquist, *Diary*, §13, §65.
[50] See *Notebook*, pp.99/206. See also Plato, *Timée*, p. 71.
[51] *Five Senses*, x.
[52] ES, §4404, cited in Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 40.
[53] AD, §1395.
[54] AD, §1393.

angels. The third category comprised 'deceitful dreams' induced by evil spirits.[55] Such dreams he believed, manifested themselves clearly to 'prophets' and select individuals like himself.[56] However, among less spiritually-advanced individuals, they appeared as 'mere illusions', containing 'nothing but mockery' based on things brought up 'by the blood' or 'past thoughts'.[57] Despite this rather positive (but private) reevaluation of spiritual oneirology, Swedenborg would continue to distinguish dreams from the representations he claimed to perceive during wakefulness, semi-wakefulness, or various other spiritual states (e.g. awake with eyes closed).[58]

a) Nightmares and infesting spirits

Swedenborg's questioning about his possible election as a prophet will be explored further in the section on the Scheringson manuscript. It is enough for now to underline that this process began earlier than thought by scholars, namely as early as 1740-1742. In *De Fibra*, he paid attention to the origin of nightmares, images seen in *coma vigil*, 'fanatical imagination' and 'ecstatic trances', suggesting that Swedenborg first avoided dealing with the divine significance and prophetic aspects of oneirology to focus on its most pathological aspects. Instead, he distinguished what was commonly subsumed as madness-induced dreams into three different categories: nightmares, 'fanatical imagination' and 'ecstatic trances', to which he attributed either primarily demonic or physiological causes.

The first of these categories Swedenborg termed paralysing nightmares, or *Incubus*, from the Latin *incubo*, to 'lie upon a thing', as if a 'spectre [was] pressing upon the chest'. When experiencing an incubus he wrote, one feels 'awake' but 'unable to act', 'immersed in phantasms' (from the Latin *phantasma*, 'unreal apparition', §534) in descriptions

[55] AD, §1393 and §1395.
[56] AD, §1393.
[57] AD, §1393.
[58] AD, §1393. Awake with eyes closed, ES, §134. See also AD, §7387 for a summary of these types of visions.

redolent of contemporary sleep paralysis.[59] Such a description fitted the classical view that nightmares were induced by demons and evil spirits, to which Swedenborg added detailed symptoms of the 'spirit flowing into the cortex' via the 'vessels emulous of the fibre' (§535), thus creating a breathing deprivation coupled with a lack of arterial blood in the cerebrum (§535-536). In *Arcana Coelestia,* Swedenborg would later describe such malevolent spirits as most aggressive in their attempts to infest humans during sleep, hence this was why Scripture stated that divine love 'never sleeps' and God took especial care of man during slumber.[60] Such descriptions were typical of early modern anxieties about death during sleep, with prayers said before bed should death happen without receiving last sacraments, along with the common Pietist practice of invoking angels to watch the soul of sleepers through the night.[61] We can also note that the incubus in *Morbis Fibrarum* represents Swedenborg's first description of malevolent spirits infesting the human body, a classic idea which he would reuse in his mature anthropomorphic model of the *Homo Maximus*.

b) Fanatical imagination and madness

During the eighteenth century, most scholars working in the emerging field of psychiatry saw madness as delusions of the imagination. Such a view was famously defended by English physicians such as William Battie (1703-1776), although it was contested by rivals such as John Monro (1716-1791) who contended that mad people possessed correct sensory perception, only lacking proper judgment and interpretation.[62]

Swedenborg's stance on the matter was intermediate between these positions. Investigating further the causes of mania, phrenitis and delirium, he described a second category of images seen during sleep, a 'dire and dreadful' delusional condition called

[59] *Lexicon*, p. 334.
[60] AC, §959, §1983.
[61] See Rirye *Sleeping*, p. 80.
[62] C. Mounsey, *Christopher Smart: Clown of God*. Lewisburg: (Lewisburg, 2001) p. 209.

'fanatical imagination'. This deluded 'internal sight' was said to cause hallucinations both during daytime and nighttime wakefulness (§523) thus preventing the eyes from seeing the world correctly. At first glance, Swedenborg's description of a delusional form of imagination affecting sensory sight was redolent of Battie's dominant view.[63] According to Swedenborg, the physiological cause of fanatical imagination was the progressive rigidity of the cortical substance, through which thoughts themselves become fixated and generated persisting 'illusions and things imaginary'. Nevertheless, he argued that such illusions could be 'dispelled' by the use of reason, thus placing emphasis on the ruling of judgment and rational interpretation, in a fashion more redolent of the positioning of Monro. Swedenborg's appeal to the faculty of reason to dissipate mental illusions appears informed by Descartes's famous argument in his *Meditations* that one should apply a 'coherence test' in order to distinguish between the state of dreaming and waking reality.[64] However, Swedenborg noted that fanatical imagination could be aggravated by strong emotions, pride, sorrow, exhaustion and confusion, and might always escape the discipline of reason. By doing so, Swedenborg alluded to the mental toll taken by his soul-body research, candidly recording in a growing sense of despair and repentance for his own vanity, how he felt close to being overwhelmed by the shadows, both metaphorical and literal, chased in his soul-body work:

> The cause of so dire and dreadful a phantasy is every cause mentioned above […] Likewise from sicknesses of the animus, from grief thereof, sadness, the sudden extinction of hope or a relapse from the highest degree of internal joy and natural light into the lowest, and into gloomy sorrow--- this event resulting especially from an excess of pride. Moreover, also from a most intense application and ardor of the mind, and from a confused convolution of ideas and this from the precipitation of the mind from a sphere of light into a sphere of shade—and thus especially in the case of those who ardently desire the state of the soul after the fate of the body. That is, when intellectual faith studies to attribute the greatest part to itself.[65]

[63] For references to madness as deluded forms of imagination, see Hay *Madness*, p. 96.
[64] R. Descartes, *Meditationes de Prima philosophia* (Paris, 1641), I, 7, and VI, 24.
[65] *De Fibra*, §526.

The growing strain, sense of vanity and emotional exhaustion recorded in *De Fibra* would continue for two more years (1743-1745), and he would come to see these tribulations as a process of spiritual trial and growth. In Swedenborg's confessional and cultural context, this was nothing new: illness perceived as a transformative spiritual experience was a common trope in both German and Scandinavian Pietism.[66]

In the meantime, these entries demonstrate Swedenborg's fine-grained investigations about different forms of sleep, mental illnesses, nightmares and various forms of sensory delusions, all of which were related to their possible deeper meaning. As we will see later on, this detailed knowledge provides a large set of actor-categories with which to analyze Swedenborg's early records of spiritual experiences, allowing us to ignore simplistic accounts about their retrospectively-diagnosed 'schizophrenic' or 'epileptic' origin.[67] It is both striking and telling that such scholars have failed to analyze Swedenborg's unpublished manuscripts on mental illness and imaginary delusions, as such manuscripts could have been argued to represent evidence of Swedenborg's own alleged descent into madness.

Nevertheless, a careful analysis of Swedenborg's literary and anatomical background provides a different picture, in which his agency is not only restored, but analyzed and contextualised in relation to the categories of his time. Although *Morbis Fibrarum* closely associates Swedenborg's studies about madness with his personal struggles, his growing exhaustion and his fascination for ecstatic trances, we now have seen how such topics were part of a much bigger anatomical series and how, in the context of the time, it would have been inconceivable for any serious scholar to produce a study of the soul without also tackling the issue of the diseases of the mind.

[66] J. Van Gent, *Magic, Body, and the Self in Eighteenth-century Sweden* (Leiden, 2009) p. 199.
[67] For references to retrospective diagnosis of Swedenborg's visions, see Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 12, note 52.

Furthermore, the spiritual value of such research appeared increasingly obvious to Swedenborg: if persistent images could arise from the emotional strain triggered by philosophical dead-ends and work-exhaustion, solace was to be found in the idea that such ordeals had a divine purpose, and that God was not only guiding his work, but also preparing from birth the bodies of all those who shall receive signs and revealed knowledge.

c) The internal breathing: ecstatic trances and prophets from birth

The idea of a physiological basis behind the reception of signs was explored further in an entry on 'ecstatic *energumene*' from 'northern regions', viz. Saami shamans who were often described in Sweden as indulging in magically-induced trances. Such 'ecstasies' not only allowed select individuals to sustain themselves on internal breathing alone for long periods of time, but also to get their soul out of their bodies, appearing nearly dead, so 'after resuscitation they may reveal thefts and declare desired secrets' (§537). This idea was in line with Swedenborg's long-held fascination for survival despite food-deprivation and sustenance provided only through the 'breath of life' referred in Scripture. The rumoured magical powers of the Saami, along with their tactical applications, were a common theme in Swedish literature since the Swedish Carolinian campaigns of the Age of Great Power.[68] Swedenborg himself had written in 1715 about the primordial lifestyle of Saami tribes under the midnight Polar sun, which possessed a remnant purity often synonymous with extraordinary powers during the lost Golden Age.[69] However, Swedenborg actually dismissed any genuine magical dimension behind these self-induced 'ecstasies', arguing instead that a similar near-death state, distinct from '*cataphora* and coma vigil', was often accidentally achieved by nearly-drowned mariners in shipwrecks (§537). A merely physiological explanation was to be found: the select

[68] Helander, *Neo-Latin*, p. 351.
[69] Helander. *Ludus Heliconius*, p. 203.

individuals who enter ecstasies experience a peculiar form of blood circulation when confronted with air deprivation, similar to 'amphibian animals' and 'sea tortoises' (§538).

As seen earlier, such an idea was in line with Swedenborg's statements in *Oeconomia* vol. II concerning arterial blood retention as a key to retaining immortality, and his own instinctive practice of apnea when concentrating since childhood.[70] Alluding to himself, Swedenborg contended that individuals with the right anatomical complexion could naturally reach such profound 'ecstasies', which had been long been mistaken in 'northern regions' for magical practice (§539). In his so-called spiritual diary, Swedenborg would later refer to only four or five occurrences during which he had experienced such a sense of out-of-body state.[71] Nevertheless, this idea hinted to a deeper questioning about predestination and select anatomical complexions: if God made someone physiologically fit since birth to reach such profound states via breath-retention, could it be that such a person was meant to receive divine signs, or even later to become a prophet, revealing secrets? Was there a physiological basis behind the gift of prophecy? Does God prepare the elect since birth?

3) Intoxication, regimen, diet and sustenance through respiration

Swedenborg's interest in sustenance and survival through the 'breath of life' in ecstatic individuals linked another remarkable contribution of *Morbis Fibrarum* to his soul-body corpus: the attention paid to diet, and the importance of a temperate regimen of ailments for revivifying the blood (§380, §387). As typical for the time, food-poisoning was identified as the most obvious cause of bodily diseases and blood corruption, with heavy nutriments causing slumber (§428-§430).[72] Nevertheless, Swedenborg contended that

[70] *OERA*, II, §231-2. For reference to Swedenborg's practice of breath-retention during his childhood see ES, §3320.
[71] For Swedenborg's out of body experiences, see ES, §651, §653. See also Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 293. For a statement on internal breathing for several hours, see CI, §449.2. On breathing, see also SA, §382.4 and §391. When internal breathing stopped, communication with angels and spiritual understanding stopped: AC, §1120.
[72] For similar views, see Guerrini, *Obesity and Depression*.

bodily nourishment (and intoxication) were not restricted to absorbing ailments by the mouth, but could also occur through respiration and 'perspiration' of 'aerial salts' via skin pores, 'as shown by the example of men who have sustained life for a long time without food and drink, and on brute animals which pass through a long period on these foods alone' (§383).[73]

Swedenborg argued that porous absorption could even occur at most subtle level, via a type of subtle etherial 'perspiration' leading, in rare cases, to intoxication of the animal spirits themselves (§386). Swedenborg's aerial and ethereal absorption built on the bodily-weight experimental measurements of Venetian iatromechanist Santorio Santorio (1561-1636), who had concluded that eaten ailments where not only excreted by feces, urine and sweat, but also by exhalation and 'insensible perspiration' (viz. the daily unperceivable loss of water through epithelial cells). Swedenborg expanded Santorio's 'insensible perspiration' by contending the body was not only rejecting elements through the skin, but could also absorb aerial and ethereal substances, either imperceptibly feeding or intoxicating itself. More broadly, Swedenborg's entries on regimen, intoxication and breathing along with their relationship to mental health and spiritual transformation were all in line with wider Enlightenment interests for the study of life-preserving processes.[74]

4) Return to Sweden (October 1740): election and networks at the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences

While still working on *De Fibra,* in September 1740 Swedenborg eventually witnessed the publication of the first volume of his *Oeconomia Regni Animalis,* which he immediately sent to Preis.[75] Swedenborg also wished to present in-person copies to the

[73] *De Fibra*, p. 262.
[74] See Porter, *George Cheyne*, Guerini, *Obesity and Depression*; Gaukroger, *Charleton*; Kennaway and Knoeff, *Six Non-Naturals.*
[75] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 487.

fervently Pietist king Christian VI of Denmark.[76] However, after an absence of four and a half years, Swedenborg was already six months late on his schedule to get back to the *Bergscollegium*, which prompted him to return to Sweden on 25 October 1740, without stopping in Denmark.[77]

When he came back to Stockholm at the end of October 1740, he became involved in a series of scholarly responses to the astronomers Anders Celsius (1701-1744) and Olof Hiörter (1696–1750). The latter was critical about an article Swedenborg had submitted about computing the declination of the magnet for the Uppsala meridian, which was probably part of his admittance process to the freshly-established Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences.[78] The academy had formally been founded about a year earlier in June 1739 and was largely dominated by members of the Hat party.[79] Although Swedenborg had pushed since the early 1720s for creating such an academy with his former collaborator Christopher Polhem (elected as 11th member of the academy), it took two more decades and the efforts of the next generation of Swedish scholars such as Celsius and Linnaeus to officially found and endow it at the end of the Horn period and the change of government.[80]

Swedenborg was nominated for membership at the academy by Linnaeus (4th member), who was then his cousin-by-marriage by dint of his marriage to Sara Elisabeth Moraea in 1739.[81] Linnaeus and Swedenborg had grown closer since their mutual relocation in central Stockholm.[82] Both men had pursued similar research interests through the 1730s, and Linnaeus was also no stranger to Swedenborg's former chemical interests, having

[76] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 486.
[77] Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 486-7.
[78] Ryder, I, p. 480.
[79] On the prevalence of the Hats in the early *Kungliga Vetenskapsakademien*, see *SBL*, 'Claes Grill'.
[80] Ellegren, *Hvad Nytt*, p. 257.
[81] Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 487-8.
[82] For reference to Swedenborg and Linnaeus relocating in Gamla Stan, see Gordh, Mair and Sourander, *Swedenborg, Linnaeus and Brain*, p. 146.

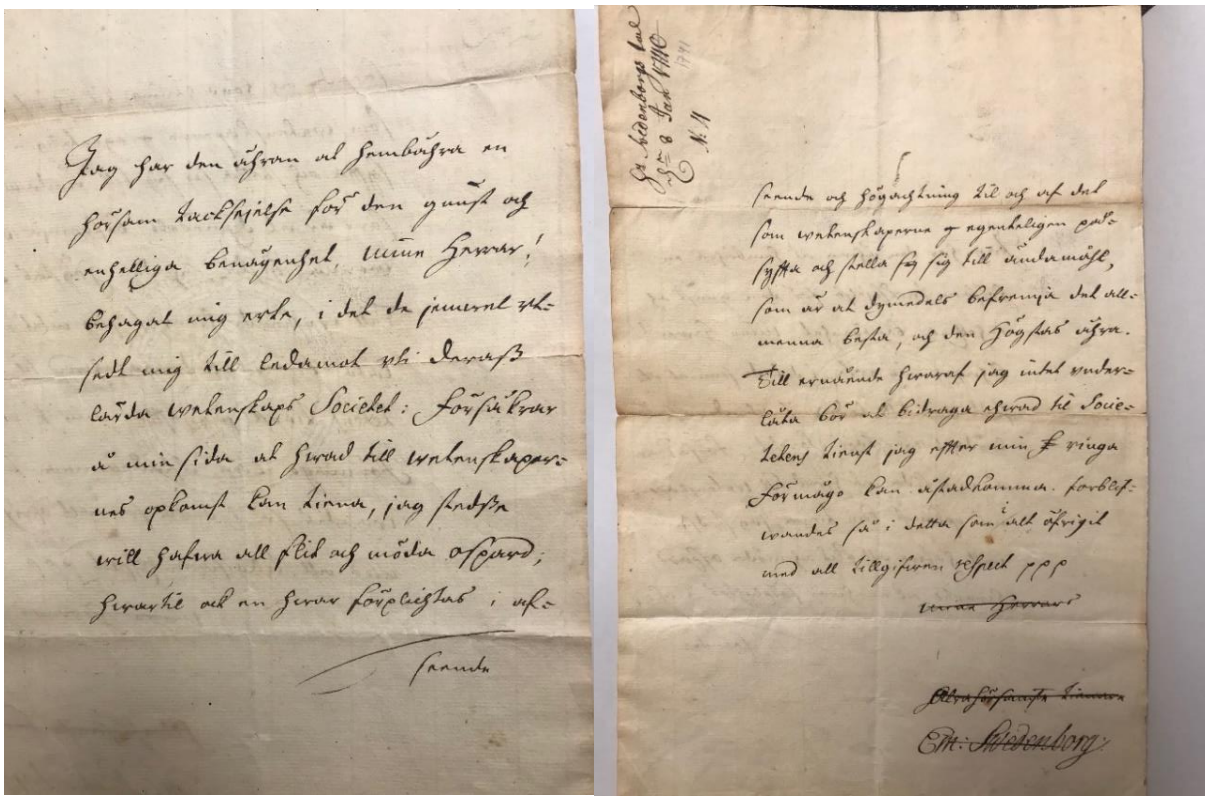
given the first lecture in analytical chemistry at the *Laboratorium Chemicum*, in 1730.[83] Four months after Swedenborg's election, Linnaeus would become professor of medicine at the University of Uppsala.[84] In December 1740, a 52-year-old Swedenborg was elected as the 60th member of the academy, and he delivered a brief inaugural speech on 8 January 1741 in which he declared that the 'end of true sciences' was to 'further the public good and the honor of the most High'.[85] He was inducted by the academy's president Anders Johan von Höpken (2nd member), a prominent Hat and a fierce opponent of Arvid Horn, who would later become Prime Minister of Sweden in 1752.[86]

In the same round of promotions was the future prime minister and prominent Hat politician Carl Gustaf Tessin (1695-1770) who acted as a patron for Linnaeus, and Swedenborg's stepbrother and fellow *Bergscollegium* assessor Anton Swab (1702-1768), whose mother Christina Arhusia had remarried Swedenborg's father Jesper in 1720.[87] Swedenborg's induction was also attended by his brothers-in-law Eric Benzelius (55th member) and Lars Benzelstierna (42nd member) and he listed as 'old friends' former diplomat Jonas Alström (1st member) a textile trader, potato and iron industrialist who was in London with him in 1710-1713, and the physician Georg Brandt, a disciple of Urban Hjärne in the *Bergscollegium* and the discoverer of Cobalt.[88] A number of Swedenborg's allies also sat as members of the academy: the former *Daedalus Hyperboreus* contributors Pehr Elvius (28th member) and Lars Roberg (20th member); Swedenborg's former preceptor and physician Johan Moraeus (27th member) and finally, one of his own financial agents in Amsterdam, the wealthy Claes Grill (40th member) who also acted as a patron for Linnaeus's research.[89] Grill acted more broadly as a banker

[83] *SBL*, 'Georg Brandt'.
[84] Gordh, Mair and Sourander, *Swedenborg, Linnaeus and Brain*, p. 146.
[85] '*befremja det all-menna besta, och den Högstas ähra*', KVA, *Swedenborg's inträdestal* and Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 487-8.
[86] *SBL*, 'Anders Johann Höpken'.
[87] *SBL*, 'Jesper Swedberg'; *SBL*, 'Anton Swab'.
[88] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 488; *SBL*, 'Jonas Alströmer'; *SBL*, 'Georg Brandt'.
[89] On Grill supporting Linnaeus's research, see *SBL*, 'Claes Grill'.

and benefactor for the whole Hat-dominated academy, which in turn rewarded Claes's shipping company with business privileges.[90] Swedenborg's induction reads as a formal recognition of his status as a well-connected natural philosopher and a moderate Hat sympathiser, with high-placed familial, political and financial connections to most academy members.

FIGURE 16 : Swedenborg's induction speech for election at the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences (KVA), 8 January 1741: 'the true end of the sciences is to further the honor of the most-High'. KVA.



[90] *SBL*, 'Claes Grill'.

III. War against Russia and the notebook of the soul

1) On soul-body, Rydelius, Wolffianism, and kabbalah

a) War against Russia, lawsuit and new leave of absence

During most of the year 1741, Swedenborg changed his plans again, and within the next two years (1741-1742) it became clear to him he had 'rushed to conclusions' (!) in *Oeconomia Regni Animalis*. On November 1740, he started the first revision of his earlier *De Cerebro* manuscript, producing the so-called *Stockholm* version (1740-1743). Two months later on January 1741, he sued his cousin Peter Schönström (later identified as a deceitful devil in the afterlife) for failure to repay the mortgage taken before leaving for the continent in 1736.[91] The trial lasted a year and a half until it was ruled in Swedenborg's favour in June 1742. The repayment of this money was of importance, for Swedenborg now planned to take a new leave of absence in the United Provinces, and he asked the king for permission to do this right after the ruling of the court in his favour.[92] Swedenborg wanted to publish a sequel (or rather a reboot) of *Oeconomia Regni Animalis*, titled *Regnum Animale*, which he planned to be 4,000 pages long and spread across seventeen volumes, while recasting his *Oeconomia* as a mere programmatic introduction (and arguably, his *De Infinito* as a mere preface).[93]

In a letter to the president of the Bureau of Mines, Swedenborg also addressed criticisms spread by envious colleagues about his frequent leaves of absence and travels abroad, assuring that they stemmed from 'duty' rather than from any ill-placed 'desire to avoid serving' in the bureau or living in Sweden.[94] He also repeated his former promise that he would resume his mineral works (although he never did) as soon as his current work was

[91] For Swedenborg's later description of his cousin as a devil in the afterlife, see ES, §5884.
[92] Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 490-1.
[93] For reference to *Regnum Animale* as a prospective 4,000 pages-long work, see Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 498.
[94] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 497.

done.[95] This pattern in Swedenborg's applications for leave of absence provides further evidence that to be able to publish on soul-body interaction, he had to present his anatomical research as a mere parenthesis in a 'larger work' about the mineral kingdom to both the Board of Mines and the king.[96]

Despite being granted leave in June 1742, Swedenborg only left Sweden a year later in July 1743, probably due to the military developments in the country. On 27 July 1741, the Hats government of Carl Gyllenborg had declared war on Russia. Despite his numerous Hats connections, Swedenborg was opposed to the War, while Eric Benzelius wholly supported the declaration, a difference that led to their mutual personal estrangement. Benzelius' support for the Hats revanchist policy further led to his promotion as archbishop of Uppsala, Sweden's highest clerical position on 20 September 1742.[97] More broadly, the Swedish-Russian war was encouraged by French diplomacy as a means to divert Russia from supporting the Habsburg monarchy during the War of Austrian succession (1740-1748). Swedenborg's reluctance to see Sweden engaged in the war was well-warranted: the declaration was rushed and the Swedish army unprepared. After a quick series of major defeats, a first armistice was requested by Sweden as soon as December 1741, while by September 1742, all of Swedish Finland had fallen into the hands of Russia.

b) Swedenborg's notebook (1741-1744), Rydelius and moderate Pietism

During the year 1741, while he was in Stockholm and was involved in the suit against his cousin, Swedenborg started to compile notes in an extensive philosophical and theological notebook which he filled from 1741 until 1744. This 700-page long Latin manuscript, retrospectively titled *Observanda in Scribendis*, offers a detailed picture of

[95] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 499.
[96] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 499.
[97] *SBL*, 'Eric Benzelius'.

Swedenborg's sources on soul-body interaction during his most intensive period of work on the topic, with excerpts mainly taken from Andreas Rydelius, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Grotius, Leibnitz, Wolff, Malebranche, René Descartes, Georg Bernard Bilfinger and the Bible. The manuscript also includes various notes on 'harmonious correspondence, geometrical arithmetic, the lord's prayer, musical harmony, optics, natural religion and the representation of oracles'.[98] Many of the citations indexed in the notebook found their way into other works Swedenborg was working on at the time, and it became a significant source for many of his later writings. For instance, many quotes from Plato and Aristotle were later inserted in *De Fibra*, while the second volume of *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* (1741) featured notebook notes from Leeuwenhoek's *Opera Omnia*, vol. 1 and 4, and from Swammerdam's *Biblia Naturae*, tome 1-2.[99]

Among the famous figures quoted, Andreas Rydelius (1671-1738) is a less familiar name though Swedenborg quoted him extensively as the leading Swedish source in the notebook. A theologian, philosopher and church reformer, Rydelius is a much-overlooked influence on Swedenborg, with a similar confessional positioning which helps to contextualise Swedenborg's own beliefs. A professor of logic, metaphysics and then theology at the University of Lund, Rydelius was a fluent Latinist and a popular teacher.[100] A defender of Lutheran orthodoxy, he nonetheless advised against the violent persecution of religious minorities, recognizing a 'pious intention' behind millenarians and Pietists, which led him to advocate the use of rational reasoning to persuade and convince religious dissenters.[101] Just like Swedenborg, Rydelius was at first a proponent of Cartesianism until he later developed his own philosophical system, characterised by a distinct emphasis on moral virtues. Rydelius was influenced both by seventeenth century

[98] *Notebook*, iii.
[99] *Notebook*, notes 100-29.
[100] *SBL*, 'Andreas Rydelius'.
[101] *SBL*, 'Andreas Rydelius'.

Cambridge Platonism and Aufklärung figures such as Christian Thomasius and Johan Buddeus.[102] Like Swedenborg, his links with Pietism were not confined to mere religious toleration: in 1735, Rydelius had met in Malmo with Nicolaus von Zinzendorf, in an abortive attempt to establish a Herrnhut circle in the city.[103] Close yet non-aligned with conservative Pietists such as the Swedish theologian Peter Murbeck, Rydelius supported an ambitious ecclesiastical reformist agenda which certainly influenced Swedenborg's own impetus as a spiritual reformer. However, the examination of Rydelius's reforms were interrupted by his untimely death just before the *Riksdag* of 1738.[104]

Nevertheless, Rydelius's emphasis on the integrity of the Church, religious toleration, the use of reason to convince dissenters, scholarship guided by strong faith and the importance of right action appears very redolent of Swedenborg's. The similarities between both figures account for the existence of a moderate current of high-placed, independent Swedish Lutherans inspired by Pietism, concerned with preserving the church while at the same time revivifying it through the combined use of reason, faith and deeds. Although there is no extent evidence that Swedenborg personally met or corresponded with Rydelius, both of them would have had numerous occasions to meet during *Riksdag* sessions, and Swedenborg's notebook quotes unambiguously demonstrate his significant interest in Rydelius's doctrines. Last but not least, Swedenborg quoted Rydelius abundantly on topics such as memory, imagination and divine signs, with particular emphasis on the non-contradiction between scripture and reason, crossovers between cartesian and neo-Platonic ideas, and a crucial emphasis on virtue, deeds and worship.[105] As we will see later, Rydelius wrote a popular work in Sweden titled *Nödiga Förnufts-Öfningar*, in which the latter praised the usefulness of allegorical images as

[102] *SBL*, 'Andreas Rydelius'.
[103] *SBL*, Andreas Rydelius.
[104] *SBL*, Andreas Rydelius.
[105] On Rydelius and imagination, see *Notebook*, p. 72.

'ingenious inventions' to induce virtue in people's mind through the *ars emblematica*.[106] Swedenborg certainly drew liberally on Rydelius's work when crafting his later memorabilia of the afterlife, as legitimate narrativised episodes for educating the minds and spreading religious doctrines.[107]

c) An eighteenth-century trope: the three soul-body systems

Swedenborg's notebook also contributed to his soul-body corpus by offering a detailed review of the dominant three systems of soul-body interaction of the time. The idea that soul-body interaction debates generally fell along the lines of three antagonist systems was widespread and had become a *topos* by the middle of the eighteenth century.[108] The three systems were commonly described as comprising the Aristotelian doctrine of 'physical influx' or physical influence, the Cartesian-Malebranchian 'occasionalism' or constant divine intervention, and finally the Leibnizian-Wolffian 'preestablished harmony'.[109] While individuals like Leibniz, Wolff, Pierre Bayle, Johann Billeb, Friedrich Baumeister and the secretary of the academy of Berlin Johann Heinrich Samuel Formey all contended that soul-body debates could be reduced to these three systems, more radical thinkers such as Samuel Hollmann, Alexander Baumgarten, Andreas Böhm and Immanuel Kant affirmed that these were actually the only possible systems which could exist.[110] Discussing those systems had become so common in learned circles that they even became satirised in philosophical dialogues, as apparent in Voltaire's *Micromégas* (1752).[111]

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[106] Jonsson, *A Drama*, p. 45.
[107] For Swedenborg's memorabilia as 'ingenious inventions', see Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 24.
[108] L. Strickland, 'The Fourth Hypothesis in the early modern mind body problem', *Ergo*, 5(25) (2018).
[109] Strickland, *Fourth Hypothesis*.
[110] Strickland, *Fourth Hypothesis*, p. 1.
[111] Voltaire, *Micromégas*, pp. 49-52.

Swedenborg acknowledged this ternary pneumatic classification and kept it until the end of his life.[112] His notebook reveals he directly borrowed it from the *De Harmonia Animi* (1723) of Georg Bernhard Bilfinger (1693-1750), a theologian, philosopher and statesman influenced by Wolff. In the line of Samuel Hollman in 1724 and later Baumgarten in 1750, Bilfinger postulated that there might be no more than three simple systems on soul and body, albeit with many sub-compounds.[113] Swedenborg discovered Bilfinger's views by a series of popular quotations in French from Jesuit father René-Joseph Tournemine (1661-1739), which led him to nickname Bilfinger's views as the 'Tourneminian system'.[114] Drawing on Augustine's definition of man as 'a soul with a body', Swedenborg's quotes from Bilfinger explored how the relationship between soul and body is not only of 'harmony and correspondence', but also of 'connection', 'possession' and 'essential dependence'.[115] As we will see in the next section, such a view was also closely aligned with Wolf, although the influence of Malebranche over Swedenborg has also been noted by scholars, along with his meetings in Paris with the Oratian fathers Jean Paul Bignon and Jacques le Long.[116]

d) Wolffianism in Sweden (and in Swedenborg).

However, Swedenborg was not the only scholar in Sweden at the time to pursue the topic of soul-body interaction through the lens of Wolffianism, which had become the then-dominant philosophical school at the time in Sweden. The Wolffian philosophy had first been introduced to Sweden during the 1720s, initially promoted by Swedenborg's old friend Eric Alstrin, who served as professor of philosophy at Uppsala (1723-1731). Alstrin praised Wolff's methodological formalism and the logic in his natural theology,

[112] See CC, §19.
[113] Strickland *Fourth Hypothesis*. See also *Notebook*, pp. 189-90.
[114] *Notebook*, p. 190.
[115] *Notebook*, pp. 189-90.
[116] For Malebranche's influence on Swedenborg, see Jonsson, *Drama*, pp. 254-5.

despite lamenting on its determinism.[117] Such criticisms were not new: the Lutheran Wolff had been famously expelled from the University of Halle in 1723 following intense pressure from Pietists, on the grounds of the deterministic tendencies of his philosophy.[118] In Sweden, Christian Wolff was generally celebrated for his mathematics, while his natural theology, blending physico-theology and teleology, met with mixed reactions.[119] Wolffianism became regarded by many as a new threat to Swedish religious orthodoxy, similar in impact to the Cartesian controversies which had enflamed Uppsala scholars during the second half of the seventeenth century.[120] Before returning to Halle in 1740, Wolff had further made many Pietists enemies during his 17 years (1723-1740) at the University of Marburg in Hesse-Kassel, a Calvinist landgraviate ruled in personal union by king Frederick of Sweden.[121] As a result, Wolff's philosophy met with long-lasting defiance from Pietists in Sweden, and its status remained largely tied to it.

In the 1730s, the main proponents of Wolffianism in the country included the two mathematicians Samuel Klingenstierna and Anders Celsius, the latter referring to Wolff as 'the greatest philosopher of our time'.[122] Celsius became the main Swedish champion of Wolffianism after his appointment as professor of mathematics in Uppsala in 1728.[123] Yet, he quickly left for extended travels, and Wolffianism fell out of favour, following a series of counter attacks from prominent Swedish Pietists.[124] The university chancellor Gustav Cronhielm, to whom Swedenborg had earlier dedicated his poem *Camena Borea*,

[117] R. Calinger, 'Wolffianismens Genombrott i Uppsala by Tore Frängsmyr (Book Review)', *Isis*, (66:1) March (1975), p. 132.
[118] I. Jonsson, 'Wolffianismens Genombrott i Uppsala by Tore Frängsmyr (Book Review)', *History of Science*; Cambridge Vol. 12(2) (1974), p. 153.
[119] Calinger, *Wolffianismen*, p. 132.
[120] Jonsson, *Wolffianismens Genombrott*, p. 152.
[121] On Wolff's years of teaching at Marburg and his move to Halle in 1740, see W. Drechsler, 'Christian Wolff (1679-1754) a biographical essay', *European Journal of Law and Economics*, 4(2) (1997), pp. 113-7.
[122] Calinger, *Wolffianismen*, p. 132.
[123] Calinger, *Wolffianismen*, p. 132.
[124] Calinger, *Wolffianismen*, p. 133.

sought to subdue Wolffianism, while theology professor Andreas Winbom attempted to expose its artificiality.[125]

Nevertheless, the repression of Pietism in Sweden during the mid-1730s led to a renewal of respectability for Wolffianism, strengthened by Cronhielm's death and Celsius's return.[126] Wolff was even invited to teach in Uppsala as professor of political science and oration in 1737 and 1738, and Wolffianism was no longer considered a threat to religious orthodoxy.[127] His *Theologia naturalis* even became seen as a vessel for apologetics by the Swedish Lutheran church.[128] Through the 1740s and 1750s, Wolffianism became the dominant philosophy at Uppsala and was gradually used as a tool to enforce Lutheran orthodoxy. Like Swedenborg ten years before him, in 1751 the theology professor Nills Wallerius (1706-1764, 26th KVA member) wrote on soul-body interaction and used Wolffianism as a weapon against atheism, deism, and materialism.[129] Wallerius further became a vocal anti-Pietist opponent, particularly of the *Unitas Fratrum* of Nicolaus von Zinzendorf, in contrast to Swedenborg who had confessed an early appeal for the doctrines of Conrad Dippel and would within two years become attracted to Moravians during his next stay in London.

Although Frederick of Sweden supported the writings of Wolff, the latter's return to Halle, where he was awarded many honors by Frederick II and ennobled as *Reichsfreiherr* in 1745, did not silence long-standing suspicions towards his natural theology.[130] Wolff's later career was marked by a gradual decline in the popularity of his philosophical teachings until his death in 1754, while Pietists maintained their long-

[125] Calinger, *Wolffianismen*, pp. 132-3. See also Helander, *Camena Borea*, p. 34.
[126] Calinger, *Wolffianismen*, p. 132.
[127] Jonsson, *Wolffianismens Genombrott*, p. 153.
[128] Calinger, *Wolffianismen*, p. 133.
[129] See e.g. Nils Wallerius, *Systema metaphysicum* (1751), III, §1025, p. 275.
[130] Jonsson, *Wolffianismens Genombrott*, p. 153.

standing accusations of atheism and impiety.[131] It is along the lines of this progressive demise that Swedenborg followed Pietists criticisms after his refashioning as a prophet, casting Wolff as a faithless materialist spirit who actually had never believed in religion.[132]

However, by 1742, Wolff remained a primary influence over Swedenborg, who quoted the main features of each system as summarised by him, with almost two hundred quotations, sometimes running across several pages.[133] According to these Wolffian summaries, the claims of Aristotelian schoolmen lacked explanation about the interdependent action between soul and body, and Swedenborg noted that Wolff had nothing but hard words for them, labelling their 'physical influx' of 'body into the soul' and 'soul into the body' as an occult quality (§582), masked by 'empty terms' (§583), lying beyond confirmatory experiments (§587) and destitute of 'all probability' (§588).[134] Occasionalism was no better: in his records from Wolff and Bilfinger, Swedenborg noted how the latter 'frequently marveled that learned men could approve of opinions so unphilosophical' since they introduce 'perpetual miracles and have no regard for the disturbance of natural laws'.[135] 'The interposition of God, as held by this new doctrine, or a mutual influx of soul and body as held by the common opinion' was castigated by Bilfinger, while Wolff discarded it as contrary to his famous *principium rationis sufficientis*, explaining away the nature of soul-body interaction by resorting to constant miraculous intervention.[136] Similarly, Swedenborg recorded via Bilfinger objections from Leibniz, who accused occasionalism of being no different than the materialist one-

[131] On Wolff's ennoblement, see Drechsler, *Christian Wolff*, p. 117. On his loss of popularity, see p. 119. On early accusations of atheism by Pietists, see p. 113.
[132] See ES, §6049 (3) and §4744 (3). See also TE, §38.
[133] *Notebook*, p. 535.
[134] *Notebook*, p. 194.
[135] *Notebook*, pp. 95, 197.
[136] *Notebook*, pp. 97/201.

substance monism of Spinoza.[137] Monists, idealists and materialists were criticised alike for admitting 'no harmony between soul and body' and for having no need for such a system.[138] Swedenborg recorded how materialists such as Hobbes admitted the existence of 'nothing more than material entities', while idealists such as George Berkeley were in effect monists, holding 'no other existence to bodies than an ideal one' in our immaterial souls.[139] From these criticisms, we see that Swedenborg thoroughly reviewed the main soul-body systems of his time through the lens of Wolffianism, at the time where Wolff's philosophy reached a peak in popularity in Sweden. This approach would continue to prevail in Swedenborg's soul-body writings until the mid-1740s, until his Pietist tendencies led him to a radical rejection of Wolffianism.

e) Swedenborg, kabbalah and Swedish philosemitism

Swedenborg's notebook also raises the question of his possible interest in Leibnizian accounts of Jewish kabbalah, along with to what extent such an interest might have influenced his soul-body interaction theories. Swedenborg's relationship to kabbalah has been much debated by scholars, usually on the grounds of perceived similarities between his later anthropomorphic model of *Homo Maximus* and the kabbalistic motive of the Adam Kadmon.[140] Swedenborg's concept of 'divine influx' has also frequently been linked to possible kabbalistic influences in his writings.

However, such comparisons have failed to demonstrate tangible kabbalistic influence on his cosmology nor on his exegesis.[141] Swedenborg's main quote from Leibniz about

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[137] *Notebook*, pp. 95/198.
[138] *Notebook*, §551, 556.
[139] *Notebook*, p. 173.
[140] See Lamm, *Development*, p. 284, and Schuchard, *Secret Agent*. See also R. Esterson, 'Did Swedenborg Study Kabbalah? Part 1: Comparison of Ideas', *Blogpost Swedenborg Foundation*, 2016.
[141] Schuchard, *Secret Agent*, although I would argue that assessments of Swedenborg and Kabbalah in Martin Lamm, Moshe Idel, James Lawrence are also uncompelling or problematic. Other scholars have downplayed the relationship such as W. Hanegraaff, 'Swedenborg, the Jews, and Jewish Traditions' in *Reuchlin Und Seine Erben*, P. Schafer and I. Wandrey (eds.) (Ostfildern, 2005), pp. 135-54, and F. Stengel, *Aufklärung bis zum Himmel: Emanuel Swedenborg im Kontext der Theologie und Philosophie des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen, 2011), pp. 408-19.

kabbalah highlights a primary interest in the conditions of freewill rather than in kabbalah in itself. Moreover, the so-called similarities do not resist alternative explanations such as a mutual reliance on common neo-Platonic sources, a fact reinforced by Swedenborg's complete absence of references to midrash or kabbalah in his theological writings. Swedenborg's lack of references to Jewish hermeneutics was a deliberate choice, and his relationship to Judaism, Hebrew and kabbalah sheds light on their place in his views on soul-body interaction.

First and foremost, Swedenborg's positioning was grounded in widespread Swedish attitudes towards Jewish mysticism. Like most of his Swedish peers, Swedenborg had an ambivalent relationship towards Judaism, which included a marked entanglement of common Christian prejudices balanced with the view (commonplace since Augustine) that Jewish knowledge of Hebrew might benefit sacred Christian philology and a Christian understanding of the old testament.[142] Swedenborg consistently discarded Judaism as an external faith devoid of internal spiritual meaning, a dismissal which did not extend to his philological interest for the Hebrew language, much like his professors and scholarly peers.[143]

During the *Stormakstiden*, there was a relative trend of philosemitism in Sweden. This was part of a wider movement of fervent Protestant-Hebraism supported by Pietism along with hopes to achieve the long-desired religious conversion of the Jews towards reformed Christianity. Interest for Hebrew philology, kabbalah and midrash had already appeared in the works of prominent Swedish scholars such as the project of a Johannes Bureus (1568-1652), Johann Skytte (1577-1645) and Georg Stiernhielm (1598-1672). These authors produced Christian syntheses of kabbalistic lore, epitomised by Bureus's famous

[142] P. Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews: A Christian Defense of Jews and Judaism* (New Haven, 2010) p. 276; R. Esterson, *Secrets of Heaven: Allegory, Jews, the European Enlightenment and the case of Emanuel Swedenborg* (PhD thesis, University of Boston, 2017), p. 123.
[143] See e.g. UJ(P), §254.

writings on a Scandinavian runic Kabbalah.[144] During the reign of Charles XI (1655-1697) Jews were required to abjure their confession and become convert members of the Swedish Lutheran church. At the same time, Charles XI supported the scholarly investigation of Hebraic texts in Uppsala.[145] The status of Jewish communities in Sweden improved through the eighteenth century, as Jewish merchants negotiated privileges in exchange of bringing capital to the financially-strained royal household.[146] Jewish commentaries such as in the works of Abravanel, Ibn Ezra, Rashi and Maimonides were available in Swedish university libraries during the Age of Freedom, while Jewish converts were sought after as adjunct lecturers of Hebrew and rabbinic theology, while professorial chairs obviously remained in the hands of Swedish scholars.[147]

In this context, Swedenborg was educated in an environment versed in Hebrew studies and he received basic training in it during his university years. His father Jesper Swedberg valued the knowledge of Hebrew language for his children and referred to Swedenborg's training in Hebrew in 1715 by stating that his son was 'ready in *orientalibus linguis*'.[148] Nevertheless, Swedenborg's beginner Hebrew notes, which he took up again in the late 1740s, suggest his initial training had actually remained rudimentary, while his father's claims were exaggerated to present his then-unemployed son in a more favourable light to the king.[149] Having freshened up his skills at the age of 59, Swedenborg later presented himself in *Arcana Coelestia* as 'skilled' in the Hebrew language, a crucial credential to establish his credibility as an old testament exegete.[150]

[144] H. Håkansson, 'Alchemy of the Ancient Goths: Johannes Bureus' Search for the Lost Wisdom of Scandinavia', *Early Science and Medicine*, 17(5) (Leiden, 2012), pp. 500-22.
[145] Esterson, *Jews*, p. 56.
[146] See J. Jacobs, and G. Lindner, 'Sweden', *the Jewish Encylopedia* (1906).
[147] Esterson, *Jews*, p. 59
[148] On Jesper and Hebrew, see Bergquist, *Secret*, p.22. For the 1715 quote, see Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 64.
[149] *Spiritual diary*, I (London, 1977) p. 420, after §192.
[150] AC, §5858.

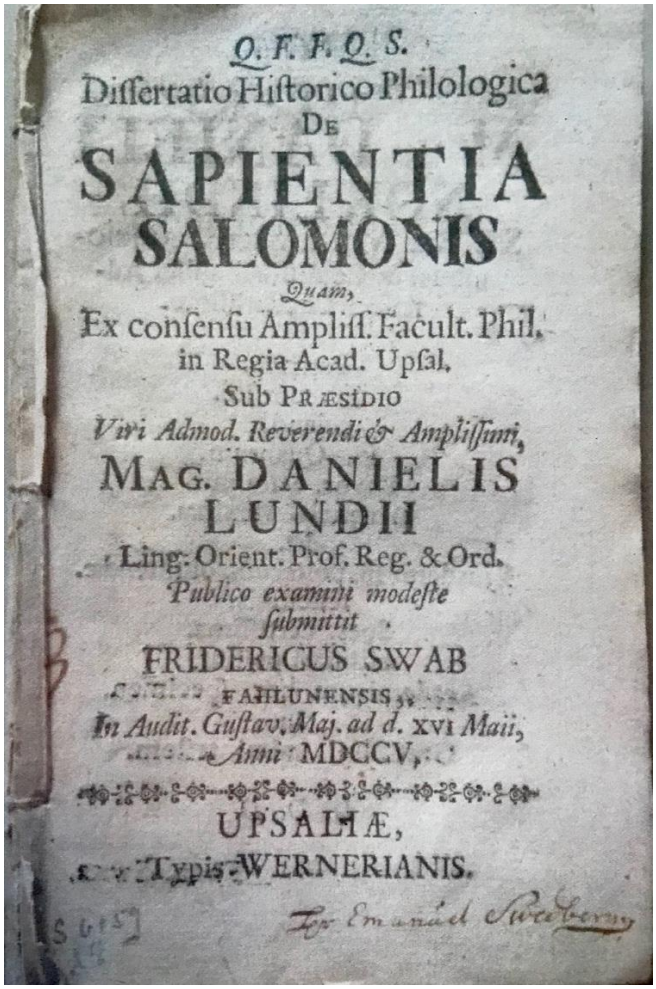
Swedenborg's main introduction to Jewish hermeneutics and the Hebrew language during his university years was likely conveyed firsthand by his mentor and brother-in-law Eric Benzelius. Benzelius was a fluent Hebraist scholar: his dissertation provided a Hebrew-Latin translation and commentary of Maimonides' *Shekalim*, the third section of the seventh book of the *Mishneh Torah* on the Biblical shekel contribution to the Temple, with extended commentaries of the text.[151] A personal friend of Leibniz, Benzelius also exchanged on kabbalah with Jewish scholars at Uppsala such as Johann Kemper (1670–1716) a convert who produced Hebraic commentaries aiming to reconcile the latter's newly embraced Lutheran views with various aspects of the Zohar, rabbinic Judaism, kabbalah and Sabbatean doctrines.[152] This reflects the context of the time, where interpretation of scripture informed by Hebrew philology and the rabbinic tradition sought to provide a vivified confirmation of Christian truths.[153] Like most Jewish converts, Kemper never held any official position at the university and was employed privately by Eric Benzelius. Despite the closeness of the two scholars, attempts to trace influence of Kemper's writings into Swedenborg's have proven inconclusive, and it does not seem that Swedenborg ever shared the philosemitism of his mentor and professors, although his interest for Hebrew philology and hermeneutics increased as a theologian, as for any Christian involved in the study of the Old Testament.

Arguing further in favour of a lack of interest of Swedenborg for kabbalah, we find 'Emanuel Swedberg''s non-autograph name written on a thesis disputation on Christian kabbalah defended by oriental languages Uppsala professor Daniel Lundius (see Figure 17). Lundius's dissertation on 'Solomonic wisdom' discussed distinct features, pros and cons of kabbalah, and was defended at Uppsala in 1705, with Swedenborg's cousin

[151] E. Benzelius, *Siclus Judaicus, id est Rabbi Mosis Majemonidis tractatus de siclis* (Uppsala, 1692).
[152] Esterson, *Jews.*
[153] Esterson, *Jews.*

Frederic Swab listed as respondent.[154] Swedenborg's name was probably added by the cleric in charge of handling dissertation copies to the different student nations.[155] The 17-year-old Swedenborg might have attended the disputation, and regardless of whether he did or didn't, the absence of notes inside the dissertation added to the fact that he discarded the dissertation strongly suggests he was not interested in engaging further with the content of the treatise.[156]

FIGURE 17 : Daniel Lundius, *De Sapientia Salomonis* (Uppsala, 1705) dissertation with non-autograph signature *'H[err] Emanuel Swedberg'*, given to Swedenborg but not kept by him. Courtesy of Susanna Åkerman-Hjern. Private collection, Stockholm.


Q. F. F. Q. S.
Dissertatio Historico Philologica
De
SAPIENTIA
SALOMONIS
Quam,
Ex consensu Ampliss. Facult. Phil.
in Regia Acad. Upsal.
Sub Præsidio
Viri Admod. Reverendi & Amplissimi,
Mag. DANIELIS
LUNDII
Ling. Orient. Prof. Reg. & Ord.
Publico examini modeste
submittit
FRIDERICUS SWAB
FAHLUNENSIS,
In Audit. Gustav. Maj. ad d. XVI Maii,
Anni MDCCV,
UPSALIÆ,
Typis WERNERIANIS.
For Emanuel Swedberg

[154] Fredrik Swab (1683-1734), later registrator at the expedition of foreign affairs, was a son of Anton Swab and Helena Bergia, who was a sister of Sara Bergia. On the dissertation, see S. Åkerman-Hjern, 'De Sapientia Salomonis: Emanuel Swedenborg and the Kabbalah', in P. Forshaw (ed.), *Lux in Tenebris, The Visual and the Symbolic in Western Esotericism* (Leiden, 2016).

[155] On academic disputations at Uppsala during the period, see K. Östlund, 'Några nedslag I disputationsväsendet under 1700-talet – exemplet Johan Ihre', Vol. 3 and 4, *Sjuttonhundratal* (2006-2007), pp. 151-67.

[156] For an analysis of the content of the dissertation, see S. Åkerman-Hjern, *De Sapientia Salomonis*.

In other words, Swedenborg had from a young age access to family members, professors and scholars versed in Hebrew and interested in the possible benefits of Jewish kabbalah to Reformed Christianity. Nevertheless, Swedenborg went a different path: he remained a beginner in the language for most of his life, discarded kabbalah-related materials printed at his intention and held a lifelong contempt for the overall spiritual inferiority of Jews and Judaism.

In his later notebook, Swedenborg quotes Leibniz's account of the kabbalah from *Theodicae De Bonitate Dei,* with a particular emphasis on divine will and predestination mediated through the lowest sephira, Malkhuth.[157] Swedenborg was particularly interest by Leibniz's take on Malkhuth as an intermediary degree of divine action, in relation to the nature of free will before the Fall. In his take on kabbalah, Leibniz interpreted Adam's move from God's will as a separation from Malkhuth, which the divine used to govern all things through it, stating that 'All things are administered by God through Malkhuth, who moves things irresistibly but smoothly and without violence; so that man, when following the divine will, thought that he was following his own'.[158] Swedenborg seems to have been more fascinated by the illusory nature of man's free will during Edenic times rather than by the fact that such an illusion took place through a kabbalistic sephira. Falling along similar lines, another notebook entry taken from Grotius saw Swedenborg recording that the views of 'the Cabalists' (with no distinctions made about who the 'Cabalists' might be) were in agreement with the 'doctrine of the trinity', a doctrine which he strongly came to reject.[159]

In conclusion, a close review of context shows how discussions about kabbalah were integrated within learned circles close to Swedenborg, and how his attitude in notes (and

[157] *Notebook*, p. 79.
[158] *Notebook*, p. 79.
[159] *Notebook*, p. 250.

later on, in his theology) reflects an overall lack of interest and consistently dismissive attitude towards Jewish hermeneutics. This further discard claims of kabbalistic influences in Swedenborg's writings: as seen in his manuscripts, his interest towards the matter remained superficial and marked by commonplace anti-Jewish prejudices. Nevertheless, such prejudices did not extend to the study of sacred Hebrew philology, which Swedenborg regarded, like most learned Christians, as a sacred duty in order to access the Old Testament in its original language. As a result, he picked up the study of Hebrew again following his project to produce an exegesis of the books of Genesis and Exodus in the mid-1740s.

IV. On spirits and Swedenborg's Wolffian *Psychologia Rationalis*: theological turn and first exegetical methodology (1742)

a) Landmarks for a doctrine of spirits in Swedenborg's notebook

Another entry commonly associated with kabbalah in Swedenborg's notebook lies in his quotations from a 1715 Amsterdam edition of *Entretiens sur les sciences secrètes* published by the 'Comte de Gabalis', a pseudonym forged on the word 'Cabala' by Frenchman Henri de Montfaucon, also known as the Abbé de Villars (1638-1673). As shown in the section on the interpretation of dreams, Swedenborg's quotations of Villars were part of a wider interest for evocation and prophecy. It is through his research on soul-body interaction and the nature of intermediary substances that Swedenborg started to build a doctrine about the nature of spirits and intermediary beings.

Featuring an omnipresent blend of laughter, libertinage and ambiguity, *Entretiens sur les sciences secrètes* was a best seller which plagiarised Paracelsus's *Ex Libro de Nymphis* on aerial spirits, demons, devils, sylphs, faeries and divination through the elementals.[160]

[160] K. Olsen and J. Veenstra, *Airy Nothings: Imagining the Otherworld of Faerie from the Middle Ages to the Age of Reason* (Leiden, 2013) pp. 214-5; J. Vion-Dury and P. Brunel, *Dictionnaire des mythes du fantastique* (Limoges, 2003) pp. 145-9.

In the 1670s it was widely perceived as a French satire merging different beliefs, such as the Greek nymphs, the aery sylphs, spiritizing the Salamander, the Greek earth daemons hyphialtes and identifying the gnomes of folklore as agents of communication between mortals and daemons.[161] After its first publication the book was perceived as anti-religious in tone and indexed. However, it was taken more seriously during the eighteenth century, and became perceived as an authentic Rosicrucian text, and Villars as an heir of Paracelsus, possibly murdered because of his revelation of authentic secrets.[162]

The fact that Swedenborg refers to the author as 'Comte de Gabalis' instead of Villars or Montfaucon indicates he was not aware of the fictional nature of its author. [163] Familiar with Paracelsian literature, Swedenborg bought the book during one of his travels to Amsterdam, probably thinking it to be a genuine Paracelsian source about the nature of earthbound spirits. The book mentioned the difficulty of perceiving those entities and referred to the last judgment as the time where evidence of their existence would be revealed. Swedenborg was particularly interested in entries about oracles coming from benevolent elemental spirits rather than from the devil, thus weighing on the side of legitimizing contact with spirits.[164] Alongside Villars's quotes, we find quotations of Plato, stating that the aerial kind of daemons act as invisible intermediaries between God and men. Although these daemons are near at hand, yet they do no become manifest to our sight, a statement redolent of Swedenborg's later claims of constant presence of spirits inside and outside every mortal.[165] From these accounts, we see how Swedenborg gradually constructed his doctrine of spirits, bringing together ancient texts and modern ones in a continuum, from Aristotle to Plato, Leibniz and popular Paracelsian sources.

[161] Vion-Dury and Brunel, *Dictionnaire*, pp.145-9.
[162] Vion-Dury and Brunel, *Dictionnaire*, pp. 145-9.
[163] *Notebook*, p. 89.
[164] *Notebook*, p. 89
[165] *Notebook*, pp. 89-90.

b) A fourth model, and the foundations of Swedenborg's theological doctrines

In August 1742, the new Swedish Diet opened and seated for twelve months to find an issue to the disastrous defeats against Russia. Pushing for peace with Russia was a major concern for Swedenborg, who attended the highest number of sessions (26 out of 72) of his parliamentary career during the period.[166]

Nevertheless, the year 1742 was also fruitful for Swedenborg in terms of soul-body research. During the year, Swedenborg sent instructions to Changuion to republish *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* under his own name.[167] While this process was taking place, Swedenborg composed his manuscript *Psychologia Rationalis,* a composite early draft of his later study of the five senses (1744), inspired by his notes on Wolff's own *Psychologica Rationalis* and meant to serve as the sixth transaction of his *Oeconomia*.[168] The manuscript deals with the passions and vices of the human mind, in a manner redolent of Wolff's approach to not only explain the nature of the interaction between soul and body, but also to give an account of the 'passions' of the human mind and their causes, in a closer sense to the modern meaning of the term 'psychology'.[169] As characteristic of this intense period of his life, Swedenborg proceeded to multiple rearrangements and change of structure plans, which led the manuscript to be scrapped.[170] However, these discarded materials feature some of the boldest aspects of Swedenborg's intellectual thought, and *Psychologia Rationalis* is no exception, featuring nearly all the key topics he would explore further as a theologian during the next thirty years.

Apart from a brief study of the five senses and the role of sensorial perception in building rational knowledge (which we will later examine in contrast to his mature study on the

[166] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 493.
[167] See Ryder, I, pp. 429-31.
[168] Ryder, I, p. 516.
[169] Wolff has often been credited as being the first use to *Psychologia* in a modern sense.
[170] For a detailed summary of these changes, see Ryder, I, pp. 516-7.

five senses), the manuscript includes a dedicated section on the interaction of soul and body, stating the superiority of Swedenborg's own model of *harmonia constabilita*, defined as divine influx mediated by correspondences, via the three degrees of the human mind: soul, *animus* and *mens*.[171] From the middle to the second part of the eighteenth century, attempts like Swedenborg's to introduce a 'fourth system' of soul-body interaction became commonplace. In 1763, French mathematician André-Pierre Le Guay de Prémontval submitted his hypothesis of 'psychocracy', a 'fourth system' about the rule of the soul to the Berlin Academy of Sciences, based on his 1755 treatise *La Théologie de l'être*.[172] In 1752, Voltaire presented Locke's agnostic position on soul-body interaction as 'more reasonable' than the three other models.[173] Closer to Swedenborg, the German theologian from Elbing Johann Ernst Schubert coined in 1738 his fourth 'system of agreement' model, in effect a variation on pre-established harmony. Swedenborg's research should be regarded as part of such attempts, with his fourth system of *harmonia constabilita* was positioned as a correction of the more famous Leibnizian-Wolffian system of *harmonia praestabilita*.

c) Ghosts, relics, space-time, thought-sharing, and divinely-elected prophets

Swedenborg's soul-body system was completed by a wide range of new stances on theological topics, such as divine, conjugial and venereal love, self-love, immortality, avarice, death, the state of the soul after carnal death, the nature of heaven, hell and divine providence.[174] Of particular relevance for our argument is Swedenborg's discussion about the surviving essence contained in relics, and the persisting existence of ghosts after physical death. This latter point should be viewed in line with his *De Fibra* statements on the possibility of soul disjunction from the body. Swedenborg reaffirmed

[171] Acton, *Rational Psychology*, §167, p. 91-2; see also pp. 263-4, §474-5.
[172] Strickland, *Fourth Hypothesis*, p. 1.
[173] Voltaire, *Micromégas*, pp. 49-52.
[174] Acton, *Rational Psychology*, ix.

such a possibility, quoting Plato's account of soul-travelling during contemplation from the pseudo-Aristotelian text *De Secretiore Parte Divinae Sapientiae secundum Aegyptos*, which he had praised in his notebook.[175]

In his *Psychologia Rationalis* manuscript, Swedenborg further contended that the soul does not go anywhere after death, but merely experiences a change of state, free from space, place, duration and time.[176] Existence of a spiritual world unbound by space and time also allowed Swedenborg to reassert his belief in thought-sharing at a distance, which he had long regarded as an empirically-proven fact despite widespread scepticism.[177] Moreover, Swedenborg's broader interest for the nature and boundaries of human thought was a fashionable topic in the 1740s and was not restricted to Wolffianism. Moving away from traditional Baconian models of action at a distance, thought-transfer had become linked to Lockean associationism in the works of contemporary figures such as the British philosopher and anatomist David Hartley (1705-1757), who like Swedenborg's earlier works, sought to explain physiology and psychology through a mechanistic doctrine of vibrations, inspired by Newton's theory of vibrations.[178]

Swedenborg was now convinced that no spiritual purification could occur without a rigorous combination of continuous practice of prayer, spiritual discipline and external divine grace. Alluding to himself, he stated there is 'an election of souls' by the divine to allow the select to 'miraculously' rise over the constant battle between evil and goodness, occurring within the sin-tainted human mind.[179] The practice of self-purification through

[175] Acton, *Rational Psychology*, xviii. On this text in his notebook, see *Notebook*, pp. 508-9.
[176] Acton, *Rational Psychology*, §516, p. 284. On ghosts, see §518, p. 285. On relics, §512, p. 282.
[177] On thought-sharing at a distance, see *ibid*, §518, p. 285.
[178] R. B. Glassman and H. W. Buckingham: 'David Hartley's Neural Vibrations and Psychological Associations', in Harry Whitaker, C. U. M. Smith, Stanley Finger (eds.), *Brain, Mind and Medicine: Essays in Eighteenth-Century Neuroscience*, (New York, 2007), pp 177-90.
[179] Swedenborg, *Rational Psychology*, p. 294, §474-5.

spiritual discipline, prayer, introspection and breathing exercises would be a recurring feature of Swedenborg's manuscripts until 1744.[180]

The manuscript also saw Swedenborg officially abandoning his project of *mathesis universalis,* favouring instead the revealed theological truths which come through the active purification of one's soul, in conjunction with the doctrine of correspondences applied to scriptural exegesis.[181] This perhaps represent the clearest and earliest evidence of Swedenborg's theological turn motivated by his soul-body research: in order to continue to explore the nature of soul-body interaction, a broader range of theological topics had to be explored. More broadly, here Swedenborg expanded his concept of correspondence from soul-body interaction to the wider study of how spiritual truths are manifested (and hidden) within nature, waiting for someone to reveal them. Such an approach had less in common with the methodologies of Paracelsus and Jacob Boehme than with the classifying methodology of naturalists such as English botanist William Coles (1626-1662) and Linnaeus, who both looked for 'divine signatures' across nature.[182]

d) From anatomical to exegetical correspondences (1741-1742): 'Hieroglyphic key' and early exegetical attempts (prayer, Psalms and Proverbs)

After having explored correspondences as an anatomical concept in his *Oeconomia Regni Animalis,* Swedenborg now ventured into applying the concept to scriptural exegesis, exhibiting a growing sense of confidence that scripture might contain crucial knowledge to achieve a broader understanding of natural creation. This marked his first attempt to coin an exegetical approach to the Bible, an attempt which he split across two manuscripts: *De Correspondentia et Repraesentatione, ex Scriptura Sacra* (*About*

[180] Bergquist, *Diary,* §111-2, pp. 174-5.
[181] On giving up *mathesis universalis,* see Acton, *Rational Psychology*, p. 311, §567. On purification of the soul, see p. 294, §474-5.
[182] J.M.S. Pearce, 'The doctrine of signatures', *European Neurology*, (Berlin, 2008).

correspondences and representations in Sacred Scripture, 1741) and *Clavis Hieroglyphica Arcanorum Naturalium et Spiritualium per Viam Representationum et Correspondentiarum* (*A Hieroglyphic Key to Natural and Spiritual Arcana via Representations and Correspondences*, 1742). These manuscripts were probably written as unpublished appendices to the second volume of *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* (1741), a treatise in which, as we have seen, Swedenborg had for the first time used Biblical quotations to defend rational belief in the soul when faced with lack of empirical evidence.[183]

De Correspondentia saw Swedenborg classifying, through fifteen unequal fragments, various biblical quotations into four categories: 'harmonic', 'parabolic/allegorical', 'typical' and 'fabulous/oneiric' correspondences, a classification partially inspired by Leibniz's *Théodicée*.[184] However, Swedenborg quickly grew dissatisfied with its arbitrariness and abandoned it in his later theology.[185] In an echo of Swedenborg's future memorabilia, the '*Parabolica-Allegorica*' section features most of the Gospel parabola, while the Typica listed Old Testament anticipations of Christ, the New Covenant, the New Jerusalem and the language of angelic societies.[186] The 'fabulous and oneiric' (*Fabulosa et Somniorum*) correspondences were linked to Biblical occurrences of dreams and visions, along with the mythological poetic parts present in scripture.[187] Swedenborg's attempts to break the Bible into different hermeneutic categories were by no means original, and quite common amongst many philosophical figures quoted in his

[183] Jonsson has contended in contrast that the parabolical, typical and fabulous sections in the *De Correspondentia* manuscript (or at least part of it) might actually have been written much later. See Jonsson, *Visionary Scientist*, p. 119. Ryder, I, p. 534 disagrees with this.
[184] Acton, *Psychological transactions*: harmonic p. 218, parabolical p. 227, typical p. 229, fabulous p. 244. On Leibniz's views and use of Parabola and allegory, see E. Pasini, 'Mathematical Similes in Leibniz's *Theodicy'*, in M. Favaretti Camposampiero (ed. et als.), *Logic, Metaphysics, and Theology in Leibniz's Essais de Théodicée (1710)* (Venice, 2016), pp. 70-1.
[185] For an attempt to explain this rather eclectic part while recognizing an overall arbitrariness, see Jonsson, *Visionary Scientist*, respectively pp. 117 and 119.
[186] Jonsson, *Visionary Scientist*, pp. 117-88.
[187] Jonsson *Visionary Scientist*, p. 118.

works, such as Swammerdam, Boyle and Newton.[188] Nevertheless, this quaternary classification provides further insights into Swedenborg's theological interests at the time, such as the manifestation of divine signs, or the parabolical and poetic framing of doctrinal teachings in the Bible.

De Correspondentia also featured a rare series of entries dealing with the deeper meaning of prayer, Psalms and Proverbs, which shared common features with his soul-body work. Swedenborg lamented the widespread contempt of his contemporaries against the Psalms of David and the Proverbs of Salomon, which were frequently dismissed by Lutherans as simplistic and of minor spiritual value.[189] However, Swedenborg contended there was probably more wisdom contained in any Proverb or Psalm than in the 'whole of Seneca'. Swedenborg was weary of such impious and arrogant attitudes towards the Old Testament, despite his belief that some parts of the Word had no *sensus internus* and should not be part of the Word.[190] The idea that every word in scripture carries an immense 'internal' spiritual wisdom was further developed in sections about the meaning of prayer. In speculations redolent of the interconnected degrees that preside over soul-body interaction, Swedenborg argued that when recited, the *Pater Noster* acts as a sacred 'chain' of 'links pressed upon one another', in which no words ought to be subtracted.[191] Each word and sentence of the prayer has a higher corresponding meaning, and his short exegesis of the *Pater Noster* in the manuscript can be seen as an early example of his later and much larger exegeses of Genesis, Exodus and Revelation.[192]

[188] Jonsson *Visionary Scientist*, p. 121.
[189] Acton, *Psychological Transactions*, p. 248.
[190] For reference to Seneca, see Acton, *Psychological Transactions*, p. 248. For reference to the unequal divine origin of the Bible, see AC, §10325.
[191] Acton, *Psychological Transactions*, p. 251.
[192] Acton, *Psychological Transactions*, pp. 250-1.

By contrast, *Clavis Hieroglyphica* did not discuss biblical exegesis at all, yet exhibited a much more formal list of Wolffian propositions/examples from which are derived 'propositions of confirmations', leading to broader casuistic rules or principles.[193] The manuscript fashioned Swedenborg's *harmonia constabilita* as the existence of interdependent series of degrees, all co-respondent with each other. For instance, sexual intercourse is based on 'anatomy' (blood, muscles), fueled by 'sensations' (imagination, thought), materialised by 'actions' (venery) and governed by 'forces' (love, cupidity).[194] The idea that such correspondences should be understood as a 'hieroglyphic key', viz. a symbolic system of decoding discrete causal relations within Man, is in line with *Oeconomia Regni Animalis*, although the term 'hieroglyphs' represents a new addition in Swedenborg's vocabulary, probably stemming from a Leibnizian-Wolffian influence. This association was of importance and probably first occurred while Swedenborg was working (and struggling) on his project of algebraic language. As we will see in the last chapter, associations between projects of universal language, symbolism and hieroglyphs were commonplace at the time, and will be explored as part of a wider interest from Swedenborg and his contemporaries about sacred philology, the study of Hebrew, hieroglyphs and Chinese.

By a comparison of these two manuscripts, we get a crucial takeaway about the evolution of Swedenborg's soul-body research through the concept of correspondences: *De Correspondentia* shows how correspondences can be applied not only to soul-body interaction, but also to the interpretation of scripture. The follow-up *Clavis Hieroglyphica,* despite not dealing with exegesis at all, crucially construed correspondences as a representative, 'hieroglyphic' form of analogical language, meant to

[193] For a similar reading, see W. Hanegraff, *Swedenborg, Oetinger and Kant: three perspectives on the Secrets of Heaven* (West Chester, 2007) p. 5. For an example of such inferences, see Acton, *Psychological transactions*, 1984, pp. 157-9.
[194] see Acton, *Psychological transactions*, pp. 195-7.

be decoded across all of divine creation. Swedenborg's mature view in his *Arcana Coelestia* would merge these two ideas (exegesis and hieroglyphs), contending that correspondences exist both within nature and scripture, and that the process of performing a divinely-guided biblical exegesis merely consists in applying a sacred reading key to the 'hieroglyphic' (viz. the most internal, spiritually symbolic) dimension of scripture.

V. June-December 1743: travel to Holland, brain manuscript, Benzelius's death, and the Scheringson manuscript

1) Patronage, militaries and religious dissenters: summer travel to the United Provinces (1743) and reworking of cerebrum manuscript

While Swedenborg was working on these materials awaiting to depart, by June 1743, two Swedish generals had been executed for the loss of Finland, while peace with Russia was in sight for the summer of 1743.[195] Just before Swedenborg's departure, the Hats elected Adolph Frederick of Holstein as heir to the Swedish throne on 03 July 1743. This choice was motivated by the hope of attracting a better outcome during the upcoming peace negotiations with Russian empress Elizabeth Petrovna, who had designated Adolph Frederick's nephew as her heir.[196] This plan yielded fruits, as on 18 August 1743, Sweden signed the favourable treatise of Åbo with Russia, regaining control of nearly all Finland, minus Finnish Karelia. It is in this pacified context that Swedenborg left Sweden for Holland on 21 July 1743, to achieve and print his ambitious reboot *Regnum Animale*, which he would finish in London after arriving there in May 1744.

During his one-month travel, Swedenborg recorded several high-ranking military and political encounters, aimed at gaining support for his research. Among the most

[195] Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 496-7.
[196] Tafel, *Documents*, III, p. 1065.

significant, we find Swedenborg's meeting in Stralsund with Swedish field marshal and Privy Councilor Fredrik Axel von Fersen (1719–1794) and the latter's brother-in-law Jacob Albrech von Lantingshausen, a major in the French army.[197] Swedenborg then traveled to Hamburg in company of his old ally, general Johan Stenflycht, and with Fersen's mother-in-law, Countess Hedvig Catharina de la Gardie (1695–1745). De la Gardie was an active Hat and political-salon activist previously tasked by Carl Gyllenborg to obtain French subsidies from the French ambassador in Sweden, Charles Louis de Biaudos de Casteja.[198] Hedvig Catharina also shared dissenting religious views, as she was travelling to relocate with her six children to Paris and converted there to Catholicism.[199]

During his travel, Swedenborg's journal shows how he silenced his long-held contempt for Russian dynastic interference after the nomination of Adolph Frederick as crown-prince, in an attempt to gain the favours of the future Swedish king for his research. A week before the signature of the treatise of Åbo, Swedenborg was received in Hamburg by the 23-year-old Adolph Frederick, to whom he presented a clean manuscript copy of the first volume of his *Regnum Animale,* along with positive reviews of his former *Oeconomia*.[200] Swedenborg was also received by the new heir's brother, the prince-bishop of Lübeck Friedrich August, whom addressed him in Swedish. Like many Swedes at the time, Swedenborg was worried about Sweden falling into the hands of German princes, and he interpreted Friedrich August's knowledge of Swedish as a 'good sign' for the incoming fate of the country.

[197] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 131.
[198] S. Norrhem, Svante, *Kvinnor vid maktens sida : 1632-1772* (Lund, 2007).
[199] Tafel, *Documents*, III, p. 1064.
[200] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 132.

After presenting those materials, Swedenborg travelled again, going from Hamburg to Bremen, Groningen and Amsterdam, where he arrived in September 1743.[201] He stayed in Amsterdam probably until December 1743 and then settled in the Hague in January 1744.[202] There, he revised his notes on the brain in a third *Hague/London* version (1743-1744), while working during eight months to produce clean copies for the second and third volumes of his *Regnum Animale*, which will all be discussed in the next chapter.[203] The brain manuscript of Swedenborg at the time consisted of a third reworking of his earlier manuscripts on the brain assembled in Paris and finished in Venice. Of particular interest for our argument is a section titled 'supplement to sub-section on the soul', which Swedenborg noted 'should not be inserted in chapter or thesis' because of its 'premature' character. Nevertheless, Swedenborg could not resist drawing some preliminary conclusions as to the nature of the soul: a governing 'deity' in its 'microcosm', Swedenborg wrote that the soul constructs 'its organical fabric' in accordance to its 'essential form'.[204] Because of this, the soul provides the template for the body, creating it in such a way that the soul is ever-present in it, and ever 'cognizant of all things that happen'. This, he claimed, must grant the soul a form of 'omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence and providence in its all-little world', in a microcosm similar to God's relationship to the whole universe.[205]

2) Death of Eric Benzelius and the draconic forms of 'those who make God three'

In September 1743, Swedenborg's estranged brother-in-law and former mentor Eric Benzelius died, having unsuccessfully tried to distance himself from his disastrous

[201] Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 87.
[202] Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 87.
[203] See Ryder, II, p. 42, 60.
[204] *The Brain*, I, p. 101, §104z. See also pp. 64-6.
[205] *The Brain*, I, p. 102, §104z.

support to the lost Swedish-Russian war.[206] Swedenborg had probably been informed of Eric's illness by the latter's son Carl Jesper, whom he had met in Stralsund in August 1742. [207] Swedenborg had become gradually in conflict with his former mentor since July 1741, and his fallout with Benzelius deepened until the latter's death in 1743. Swedenborg not only disagreed with Benzelius's reckless pro-war positioning, but also criticised what he perceived as his brother-in-law's shallow, self-centered and erroneous religious views. In the spiritual world, Swedenborg would later describe Benzelius as 'no longer human', namely a 'horrible' spirit in 'draconic form' cunning in deceiving others through speech and 'simulated affections'.[208] The draconic form of Benzelius (also attributed to Peter Schönström) reflected their trinitarian and solafidean beliefs, as Swedenborg described the dragon of Revelation 12:3 in his *Apocalypsis Revelata* as 'those in the church of the Reformed who make God three, and the Lord two, and separate charity from faith, and who make faith saving but not charity together with it'.[209] It is unknown when Swedenborg learned of the passing of his brother-in-law. At the same period, he was on verge of a profound period of religious questioning, and started to record what would become unpublished materials for his earliest spiritual experiences.

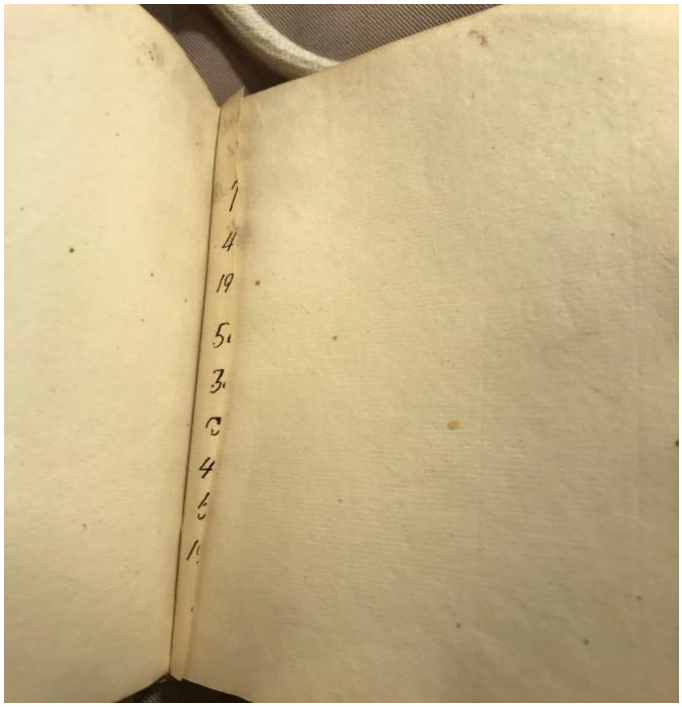
3) Beginning of the Scheringson manuscript: torn pages, vanity, personified spectres and sexual appetite (September-December 1743)

At the beginning of his journey towards Holland in July 1743, Swedenborg started to take notes in a journal he would only finish compiling in London more than a year later, on December 1744. This autograph manuscript, misleadingly known as the 'dream diary' and now known as the Scheringson manuscript, was written in Swedish and consists of a little octavo volume of 69 pages filled with content, 15 pages blank and several pages

[206] *SBL*, 'Eric Benzelius'.
[207] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 132.
[208] ES, §5722:2 and §5885:2.
[209]AR, §534.

torn by Swedenborg's heirs. A page at the end of his summer journey of 1743 was left blank, then torn afterwards, only leaving a numbered list. Swedish scholar David Dunér argued that these torn pages perhaps contained early drafts of Swedenborg's dreams or spiritual experiences with erotic overtones, in the line of his torn Venetian journal pages of 1738 and of later statements in the manuscript, although such an explanation does not account for the intriguing double digits (19, 52, 32) within the nine-numbers suite listed (see Figure 18).

FIGURE 18 : Torn numbered page, Scheringson Manuscript [Dream Diary]. KB.



During his six months in Holland from September 1743 until March 1744, Swedenborg started to record seven undated entries in the manuscript. Although laconic and sparse, the undated entries provide crucial clues about Swedenborg's existential questioning at the time. In these undated entries, Swedenborg wrote down how he felt at night that 'nothing was left to accomplish for his own glory', reflecting how he increasingly viewed his quest for anatomical fame as a product of sinful vanity.[210]

[210] Bergquist, *Diary*, §12, p. 89.

Another remarkable feature lies in how Swedenborg noted he had lost his appetite for sexual relations 'which I had been inclined towards all my life' (*at intet wara porterad för Sexen, jag warit i all mina dagar*), although lustful women would regularly return as personifications of his temptations through the year 1744.[211] Swedenborg's first records were made in the Hague, through what he described as an almost continuous state of 'wakeful ecstasy' (*extasibus vigilibus*) during which he enjoyed 'clarified thoughts' and excellent sleeping.[212] As we have seen in his *De Fibra*, these *extasibus vigilibus* were identified by Swedenborg as states of higher focus and spiritual awareness, triggered by his breath-holding exercises.

However, Swedenborg also described another type of ecstasies happening especially 'before' and 'after' sleep'. This led scholars to speculate that a number of entries in the journal consisted of records of 'half-awake' or 'hypnagogic' memories.[213] Through interpretations of insights reached during such semi-lucid states (a terminology he would certainly dispute), Swedenborg realised the ambition and impulse for his work had 'passed away', while his writings were partly 'devoid of life and coherence', containing 'foolish things' triggered by his resistance against grace and the Holy Spirit. This led him to confess that 'the faults are all mine, whilst the verities are not my own'.[214] Resistance against the Holy spirit further led Swedenborg to see 'horrible ghosts' (*såg hideusa spöken*) and it is unclear whether his records refer about facing allegorical personifications of his demons, or if he literally saw spectres before his eyes.[215] In an age where translating situations into allegorical motives was a rather automatic process, we cannot exclude that distinguishing between the two might represent a retrospective

[211] For original transcription of the text in Swedish, see *Drömmar* (Stockholm, 1860) p. 3. On the return of tentations, see Bergquist *Diary*, §120, p. 180 and Swedenborg's possible visit to a London brothel at §200, pp. 231-2.
[212] Bergquist, *Diary*, §12, p. 89.
[213] Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 92.
[214] Bergquist, *Diary*, §13-14, pp. 90-1.
[215] For reference to the *hideusa spöken*, see *Drömmar* (1860), p. 3.

modern artificial distinction.[216] Many entries in the Scheringson manuscript point to the fact that, in a fashion still typical at the time (especially in Sweden), Swedenborg personified sinful temptations as external influences (often demonic), via topical prosopopoeia.[217] As we will see in the next chapter, they point to a fascinating take on the spiritual, philosophical and political significance of gender shifts, sexuality and the eroticization of his soul-body work influenced by Moravianism.

[216] This rather automatic tendency during the Baroque Age has been analysed in H. Helander, 'Swedenborg's Latin', *Studia Swedenborgiana*. 8(1) (Newton, 1993), pp. 38-9.

[217] Bergquist, *Diary*: tentation and anxiety arise from the evil one: §38. Women and spectres represent impure, tempting thoughts: §94, §95. Women personify lust or politics: §120, §184. Women represent knowledges: §126, §264, §287, his works §261-262, spiritual truths §264; Dragons represent spurious loves §271.

Chapter IV

Servant of the God-Messiah: from anatomy to sexuality, poetry, and exegesis (1744-1747)

Introduction

The chapter explores Swedenborg's last anatomical series on the soul, its negative reception and eventual cancellation in favour of poetry and biblical studies. The chapter shows that, although Swedenborg became disillusioned with his anatomical research, he nevertheless maintained an active interest in the soul-body problem, which he regarded as the ultimate vehicle for a broader crucial apologetic enterprise. As a result, Swedenborg saw his follow-up hexameral poem, which paved the way to his later memorabilia, as the continuation of his soul-body research, and he advertised it as such to his followers. More broadly, Swedenborg's research during the period points to wider trends, such as the political dimension of soul-body discourses and their intersection with taxonomy during the first half of the eighteenth century. Moreover, the negative reception of his medical works led him to an intense phase of self-examination, during which he questioned the spiritual value of his research, and how the latter related to the meaning of his dreams, spiritual insights, and sexual fantasies. This resulted in a new sense of identity, where Swedenborg saw himself as a servant of the God-Messiah, constantly guided and instructed by spiritual entities. Reportedly endowed with a variety of new spiritual gifts, Swedenborg connected with Moravian networks which provided him with new allies and enemies for his prophetic ambitions. At odds with accusations of madness spread by his enemies, Swedenborg resumed his work at the Board of Mines and parliament for two years, while devoting his spare time to biblical exegesis. His reflections on the Canon and the *sensus internus* of scripture led him to the study of Hebrew, in a context where the

Swedish government was trying to attract Jewish assets to further the expansion of the Swedish East and West Indian Companies. Swedenborg's manuscripts reflect his ambitions of uniting inspired Jews, Christians, and Gentiles under one spiritual banner, and his early retirement at 59 to avoid a mandatory promotion allowed him to focus his efforts on the publication of his new millenarian theology.

I. Last anatomical efforts: the publication of *Regnum Animale* I-II in the Hague and travel to London.

1) *Regnum Animale*: a work of apologetics disguised as an anatomical treatise

a) Publication and reception of *Regnum Animale*

Swedenborg was in Amsterdam from January to April 1744, then in the Hague for three weeks before eventually leaving for London on 13 May 1744.[1] Those five months saw him resume his research delayed by the Swedish-Russian war, but also enter a profound introspection where he reflected on the spiritual significance of his work and a possible process of spiritual trial and growth. Preoccupied by his spiritual salvation at the peak of his distress in the Hague, Swedenborg confessed his strains to his friend Preis, who in return sent in his personal carriage the Moravian pastor Johann Gottlieb Pambo to give Swedenborg holy communion at the Swedish legation.[2] Until the summer of 1744, Swedenborg's emerging new sense of identity and spiritual transformation only reinforced his determination to demonstrate the existence of the soul to the wider medical and philosophical communities. His *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* had met with a mixed reception and failed to settle debates about the elusive anatomical basis for the human soul. This led him to conclude that the whole series should be restarted on a more ambitious scale. However, since Swedenborg was now planning a 17-volume series (!) a

[1] Ryder, II, p. 42
[2] Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 53.

cheaper publisher had to be secured, likely at the expense of lower printing and engraving quality.[3] Swedenborg secured a deal with the minor Hague publisher Adrian Blyvenburg for his new work, titled *Regnum Animale* ('The domain of the soul').

During the three weeks he spent in the Hague from 25 April until 13 May 1744, Swedenborg presented manuscript copies of the work to Preis, and then oversaw the start of its printing, although the high number of typographical errors indicates that he did not oversee the rest of the process.[4] The printing continued without Swedenborg, with part one released in June or July 1744, and part two at the end of 1744. Those two volumes, along with the third part on touch and sensation published in 1745, ended up forming his last published anatomical works. While *Oeconomia* 'only' covered the brain, the blood and the soul, *Regnum Animale* planned to explore the whole of the human body divided into 15 parts, before concluding with two full volumes on the human soul. In *Regnum Animale* part I, Swedenborg boldly printed an *Index Rerum Totius* which gave prospective titles for the whole seventeen volumes.[5]

After the printing of the first two parts had begun, Swedenborg moved to London where he stayed for fourteen months, from May 1744 to July 1745. It is there that he presented freshly-printed copies of his *Regnum Animale* I-II to a meeting of the Royal Society, probably at the end of 1744. The copies he presented are probably the same as those which ended up in the personal library of Martin Folkes.[6] Such a presentation was part of a wider effort from Swedenborg to spread his work into the London medical community, leading him to attend various medical events across the city. For instance, on 18 October 1744 he attended the annual Harveian Oration at the Royal College of Physicians at

[3] In 1745, *Regnum Animale* I-III and *De Cultu* I-II were both sold at the shop of John Nourse and Richard Manby.
[4] Ryder, II, p. 42
[5] For a list of those titles, see Ryder, II, p. 42.
[6] Ryder, II, pp. 44-5.

Warwick Lane.[7] In the Scheringson manuscript, he admitted having 'presumptuously' hoped to hear his own work mentioned in the lecture given by Ambrose Dawson (1707-1794) who instead went on to praise the works of English physician Thomas Linacre.[8] The fact that his research was not even mentioned came as a blow to Swedenborg, and fuelled his growing discouragement towards his anatomical studies.

His disappointment was worsened by the apparent lack of impact of the changes he had made. Swedenborg had conceded that, despite the almost 600 pages of *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* I-II, he had 'rushed to conclusions' in his previous work (§19). Reviewers noted Swedenborg's statement yet contended that 'his manner of treatment is the same in these new parts'.[9] Moreover, they were not only unconvinced by Swedenborg's analytical demonstrations, but also left sceptical by his appeal to the reader's faith in the absence of empirical evidence.[10] As a result of such criticisms, Swedenborg had chosen to expunge from his *Regnum Animale* all the Bible quotations featured in his *Oeconomia*. Still, his introduction placed an even more important emphasis on faith and the apologetic nature of the series. For instance, Swedenborg explicitly stated that 'the purpose of this book is a knowledge of the soul' (§14), but also 'to open a way to faith' (§22). Even more striking was Swedenborg's warning address to the readers 'who only reason by intellect since the intellect most commonly abolishes all faith in divine things' (§21). This dismissive attitude towards a seemingly ever-growing materialism embedded in the natural philosophy of his day prompted Swedenborg to dedicate his work 'to those who worship the world and believe they will die like brutes' (§22). Conjointly, he praised those who 'believe with their faith', wishing that 'may they abstain from reading my books' for

[7] Bergquist, *Diary*, §270, p. 307.
[8] See Latin transcript of the oration, in *Academy Collection of Swedenborg Documents*, vol. 6.
[9] 'Neue Zeitungen etc. 01 October 1744, pp. 706-7', in A. Acton, 'Swedenborg and his Scientific Reviewers, XL. The Animal Kingdom I-II', *The New Philosophy* (1932) 35(4), p. 141.
[10] This view would continue in the years following *Regnum Animale's* publication. See e.g. 'Nova Acta Eruditorum, September 1747, pp. 507-14', in Acton, *Scientific Reviewers* (1932), p. 151 where Swedenborg's views on the soul were dismissed as 'daydreams'.

'they are native citizens of heaven and earth' (§22). This marked another step in Swedenborg's gradual loss of confidence in philosophical understandings of the human soul, as he openly made clear that faith was superior to philosophy: 'Faith is above all demonstration, because it is above all the philosophy of the human mind' (§21). Those opening remarks not only point to the continually explicit apologetic nature of Swedenborg's anatomical research on the human soul, but also to a growing sense of spiritual identity.

b) On the soul leaving and returning to the body

Swedenborg's new research was guided by a gradual sense of his own spiritual transformation, which included spiritual intuitions guiding his work, a heightened attention paid to sensory perception, and the superior enlightenment of the soul through out-of-body experiences. Examples of this are reflected in unpublished materials originally meant to be included in the *Regnum Animale* series. One of them, the remarkably polished 197 pages manuscript meant to serve as volume VI, entitled *De Sensu communi, ejusque Influxu in Animam, et hujus reactione* (known as *The Five Senses*) provided a systematic exploration of the senses of smell, hearing, sight, taste and touch. Completed on 3-4 July 1744, the theological direction of the manuscript was affirmed early on: although sensory perception plays a crucial role in the faculties of the *mens*, spiritual truths cannot be grasped by the common human senses, only from revelation (§14).[11] The goal of rational inquiry is to make spiritual choices in free will towards the supreme good. Science and wisdom, which help assessing truth, function as tools towards the spiritual achievement of man; while the telos of mortal life is to die and reach the heavens (§641).

[11] *The Five Senses*, ix.

In a passage written on 15 June 1744, Swedenborg recorded that he was unsure about the validity of the intuitions guiding his work, especially since he still was not sure that his process of self-transformation was fully complete: **'**These things are very profound and need to be explored by many things. Here they are expounded only obscurely. But these things are obscure. –perhaps not true.'[12] In line with his earlier statements in his unpublished *De Fibra* treatise, Swedenborg however publicly contended in *Regnum Animale* that, similarly to what had been expressed by Plato, after 'recalling the mind from the senses, from the lusts of the body, the enticements of the world' the soul could 'elevate itself' to heaven, and return back to the body 'enlightened'(§12), a terminology redolent of traditional eighteenth-century metaphysics of light, which Swedenborg relied on at length (§1). This was not only in line with *De Fibra*, but also alluded to the process of spiritual growth and trial that Swedenborg had recently been facing while writing up *Regnum Animale* (see later on in the chapter). He openly alluded to his experience of dissociating the soul from his body in order to gather knowledge, an idea redolent of his interest about the Saami noaidis (shaman) which he had discussed with Polhem, and then possibly Linnaeus following the latter's famous trip to Lapland.[13] Linnaeus was famously sceptical of such accounts, and Swedenborg recognised that 'this may appear like a mere fable to those who have not experienced it' (§12). However, Swedenborg argued that even such enlightened knowledge must be mediated by an appropriate philosophical method (preferably his own), otherwise higher truths cannot be translated into human language (§20). As outlined in his *Oeconomia*, Swedenborg finally restated that, in the same way that there a limited number of soul-body systems, all philosophical inquiries end up falling on either one of two philosophical methods: namely either the *'*synthetic

[12] A. Acton, *Introduction to the word explained* (Bryn Athyn, 1927), p. 86.
[13] C. Linnaeus, *Iter Lapponicum/ Lappländska resan, 1732* (Umeå, 2005).

method' (deductive, to test a theory), or the 'analytic method' (inductive, reasoning from phenomena to principles, §6) which Swedenborg promotes.

2) *Regnum Animale*: from medicine to divine taxonomy

a) Anatomy, taxonomy, and theology during the first half of the eighteenth century

Although it has rarely been noted by scholars, the shift of title from *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* to *Regnum Animale* is significant. While, as we have seen, an *Oeconomia Animalis* was associated with a specific genre of Dutch cartesian anatomy, predominantly mechanist, fibrillary and neo-atomistic, the term *Regnum Animale* on the other hand evoked a sub-genre of philosophical treatise commonly placing the human soul within the broader perspective of taxonomy and natural history. In 1698, the German physician and physicist Emanuel König (1658-1731) from the University of Basel had published a *Regnum Animale* grounded in Augustinian revivalism, which placed the 'reign of the soul' along the vegetal, mineral and animal reigns.[14] König's ordering was part of a broader tendency during the first half of the eighteenth century, which saw the term *Regnum Animale* being increasingly associated with natural history and taxonomy rather than medicine, in a context where taxonomy was commonly perceived as an enterprise of special theological significance.[15] Examples of this include Christoph von Hellwig's *Das in der Medicin gebräuchlichste Regnum Animale oder Thier-Reich* (1716), in which von Hellwig provided a description of animated beings, viz. the kingdom of animals ('Their-Reich') within the three realms of nature (animal, mineral, vegetal), by dividing the animal kingdom into spiritual and material elementary substance, the first animating the second.[16]

[14] E. König, *Regnum Animale… Sectionibus III* (1698), *Praefatio*, i and p.1.
[15] P. Harrison, 'Linnaeus as a second Adam? Taxonomy and the religious vocation', *Zygon*, 44(4) (2009), p. 880.
[16] C. von Hellwig, *Das in der Medicin gebräuchlichste Regnum animale oder Thier-Reich* (1728) p. 5.

In Swedenborg's close context, further examples of sacred taxonomy include the Swede Johan Augustin Fasch who defended his dissertation *De Tribus Naturae Regnis* in 1705 in front of Swedenborg's mentors and colleagues Urban Hjärne, Olof Rudbeck and Lars Roberg.[17] In the same vein, Carl Linnaeus published his influent taxonomical treatise *Systema Naturae* (1735) which by 1744, was already in its fourth edition.[18] Perhaps the most influential proponent of sacred taxonomy, Linnaeus claimed that his binomial nomenclature was divinely inspired, while taxonomy itself was a religious enterprise in line of Adam's naming of the beasts in Genesis.[19] Nevertheless, Swedenborg's *Regnum Animale* featured very few taxonomical considerations, at least in regards to the classification of animals and plants. Still, he named his study of the soul *Regnum Animale*, while referring to his other works as belonging to the *Regnum Minerale*.[20] This suggests that through this title change, Swedenborg wished to associate his new study of the human soul with works promoting the existence of a fourth spiritual reign within the three reigns of nature. Such an approach placed him within a current of apologetic natural philosophers who saw anatomy, taxonomy, and theology as interconnected fields all pointing towards the existence of God, at a time where the perceived rise of atheism, materialism and impiety within natural philosophy was seen as attempting to exclude the soul from the realm of scientific discourse.[21]

b) Soul-body politics

The open religiously apologetic purpose of *Regnum Animale* should not overshadow the political references of Swedenborg's anatomical work, which tied into the political commentaries commonly associated with early modern soul-body discourses. Although

[17] J. A. Fasch, *Exercitatio phys. Fridericiana de tribus naturae regnis* (Uppsala, 1705).
[18] C. Linnaeus, *Systema Naturae* (Paris, 1744).
[19] Harrison, *Second Adam*, pp. 880 and 890.
[20] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 499.
[21] For discussion and reference to such an exclusion, see C. Wolfe (et als,) 'Animism and its Discontents. Soul-Based Explanations in Early-Modern Natural Philosophy and Medicine', *HOPOS: The Journal of the International Society for the History of Philosophy of Science*, 11(2), p. 1.

he did so to a lesser extent than Newton, Leibniz or Samuel Clarke, Swedenborg used the interaction of soul and body to discuss natural forms of political government which might be inferred from the soul's government over the human body.[22] Analogies between the human body and state government were common since ancient times, from Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita* to the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon, Cicero's *De Officiis* and Seneca's *De Ira* and *De Clementia*.[23] The theme of the community structured as one human body is also a Christian trope (Paul's Corinthians 1,12,12-27) and was a popular simile through the Medieval period.[24] After the Reformation, discussions about the nature of God and the human soul were used to criticise or put forward notions about the distribution of authority and the state.[25] Such discussions were part of major philosophical controversies during the famous Leibniz-Clarke disputes of the 1710s, which Swedenborg witnessed first-hand during his first stay in England. At one point he commented that Englishmen considered bringing any of Newton's achievements into doubt 'in dubium' as a 'crime'.[26] In the 1740s, such discussions experienced a fresh burst of interest in the context of wider *jus naturalis* debates, illustrated by Montesquieu's milestone work on the separation of powers *De l'Esprit des Lois* (1748).

In his *Regnum Animale*, Swedenborg stated that 'we may draw conclusions on human society from the body (§468), while the soul 'reigns' over its 'provinces' (*provincias*, §8). Man is a 'microcosm' (§4) while the soul is the microcosm's 'supreme force', which 'resides and acts in the principles, not of the body only, but also of the universal world' (§15). The soul rules over her 'kingdom' (§16), while 'the body is her resemblance, image and type, and she is the model, the idea, the head, the soul of the body' (§16). The

[22] On the political uses of soul-body by Newton and Clarke, see Shapin, 'Of Gods and Kings, pp. 192-3, 201. On Leibniz, see pp. 200-1.
[23] See references in Helander, *Oeconomia I*, p. 124.
[24] See Helander, *Oeconomia I*, p. 124 and Iro Kajanto, 'The Body Politic: on the History of a famous simile', *Arctos -- Acta Philologica Fennica*; 29, (Helsinki, 1995), pp. 49-81.
[25] Shapin, *Of Gods and Kings*, p. 188, 192. On god and the soul, see p. 193.
[26] Shapin, *Of Gods and Kings* p. 188, 192. For reference to Swedenborg's discussion of Newtonian controversies in 1711, see Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 33.

soul is a microcosm present in the macrocosmic universe, yet functionally independent from it (§193, I), an absence of direct causation which not only distinguished Swedenborg's model from earlier Renaissance analogical systems, but also echoed the constitutional status of the Swedish monarch controlled by the *Riksdag*. Swedenborg's conception of the soul as a divine font of power mediated by numerous sub-degrees indeed aligned with his private distaste for the unchecked powers of Carolinian monarchical absolutism. Such a position aligned him at the time with the English Whigs in a context where Swedish diplomacy was trying to support the absolutist Jacobite camp.[27] In his *Oeconomia,* Swedenborg had already compared the human body as being administered by the soul as a *Reipublicae*, a statement which echoed his own private praise of the tolerant republican government of the United Provinces in 1740.[28]

These parallels between bodily and political governance reflected Swedenborg's growing concerns during the politically sensitive context of the 1740s. Overall, Swedenborg rarely took a stance on political issues in his published philosophical writings, and like Linnaeus in the latter's *Nemesis Divina*, kept most of his criticism of political figures either under the guise of allegorical poetry, or in his private records of *experientiae spirituales*. Nevertheless, various entries in *Regnum Animale* allude to what Swedenborg perceived as dark and troubled times which might soon be leading to political and religious unrest. In the first entries of *Regnum Animale* Swedenborg denounced, with Newtonian overtones, the 'mental obscurity, fallacies, and strife brought by the 'the monsters of hypotheses' which can lead to a 'civil war between the soul and body' (§9). The 'signs of time' (§14) pointed to a 'civil war' already underway, unless knowledge of the soul could be quickly obtained in order to counter the forces of 'age, night and oblivion' which

[27] On views of the Whigs on limited monarchical powers, see Shapin, *Of Gods and Kings*, p. 203.
[28] Helander, *Oeconomia* I, §208 and §252, p. 125.

might otherwise take over at a point where nearly all hopes to discover the soul are lost (§14).

Such 'dark times' not only resonated with the perceived rise of impiety, but also with Sweden's recent exit from the disastrous Swedish-Russian war, and the recent election of a new foreign-born successor to the ageing king Frederick I. We know that Swedenborg had presented an outline of his *Regnum Animale* to the newly elected crown prince Adolph Frederick to seek the latter's support for his research.[29] But as he was part of a broader delegation of Hat parliamentarians received by the prince in 1743, Swedenborg might have seized this opportunity to highlight the valuable lessons provided by his soul-body research for a balanced natural state of government for the Swedish state. Regardless of whether he dared to do so, Swedenborg later regretted his self-presentation to the prince: he saw it as dubious 'boasting', while the future king himself would eventually attempt to restore absolute power in 1756.[30]

II. Swedenborg in London: Moravians, self-examination and spiritual transformation (April 1744-August 1745)

1) Becoming a prophet (1744-1745)

a) The Moravian Brethren in Sweden and London (May-July 1744)

Swedenborg stayed in the English capital from May 1744 to August 1745 and continued to work on the third part of his *Regnum Animale*. He sent copies of its first two parts to the Royal Society and attended various medical events such as the Harveian oration. At the same time, he went through an intense phase of spiritual questioning, part of it taking place while spending time with the London community of the Moravian Brethren. Swedenborg had become formally acquainted with Moravianism in Stockholm around

[29] Bergquist, *Diary*, §6, p. 84.
[30] For reference to boasting, see Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 84.

1741, via his Swedish friend Arvid Gradin, a leading Stockholm representative of the congregation of the German social reformer, bishop and missionary Nicolaus von Zinzendorf (1700-1760).[31] Zinzendorf's doctrines were known as Herrnhutism after the Moravian community of Herrnhut founded on his estate near Berthelsdorf, Bohemia during the 1720s (now eastern Czech Republic). Herrnhutism had taken off in Sweden following a wave of Lutheran Revivalism during the 1730s and early 1740s, peaking with Zinzendorf's controversial visit to Copenhagen in 1735.[32] The considerable publicity of Zinzendorf's sermons in Denmark had led him to be denied entry to Sweden by the Swedish Lutheran Church on the grounds of heresy, to which Zinzendorf had reacted by printing an unsuccessful open letter to the king Frederick of Sweden about the 'faith and confession' of the Moravian congregation.[33] Despite this rejection, which was very similar to the Swedish Church's reaction to Conrad Dippel's radical pietism in 1728, Zinzendorf's ideas had quickly gained many followers within Sweden's highest circles. In Stockholm, many of the Swedish Herrnutists gravitated around the clergymen Thore Odhelius and Gradin. Amongst Odhelius and Gradin's followers were younger members of the Board of Mines, such as Erland Fredrik Hjärne (1706-1773) the son of Swedenborg's former superior Urban Hjärne.[34] The year 1743 was a year of expansion for the Herrnhutist faith in Sweden, with Odhelius proudly reporting to Gradin that in Stockholm 'souls are being awakened in larger numbers'.[35] It is during this year just that Swedenborg acquired Gradin's *Short History of the Bohemian-Moravian Protestant Church of the United Brethren* (London, 1743).[36] The Herrnhutists' missionary ambitions were global, and resonated well both with Swedenborg's family networks in transatlantic missionary conversion and his growing interest into the spiritual welfare of enslaved Sub-

[31] Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 32.
[32] Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 31.
[33] Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 31.
[34] Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 31.
[35] Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 32.
[36] See Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 474.

Saharan Africans, at a time where the Moravian Brethren were renowned for their conversion of 'thousands' of enslaved Africans in the Americas.[37]

b) Alleged breakdown and falling out (May-July 1744)

When he arrived in London, Swedenborg lodged for his first two-and-a-half months in the house of John Paul Brockmer, a Moravian engraver from Salisbury Court, Fleet Street, one of many Moravians specializing in the luxury trade of gold watchcase chasing.[38] Swedenborg had received recommendation to live with Brockmer from Johann Senft (1688-1752), a Moravian 'pious shoemaker' serving as Warden of the German Moravian congregation of London, whom Swedenborg had met while travelling on a packed boat from The Hague to England.[39] Brockmer's house was close to the Moravian church at Fetter Lane, Holborn, at which Swedenborg worshipped on Sundays during the period.[40] During Swedenborg's stay at Brockmer's the meetings of the Brethren took place in the latter's house, with Senft being often present.[41] Examination of the Fetter Lane church archives also reveals that Swedenborg had good relationships with several congregation members, and that he discussed his religious views with other Moravians who would later become early Swedenborgians, such as Catherine Wright Armitage, the mother of English poet William Blake.[42]

These exchanges influenced Swedenborg's own religious questioning, although a number of his theological doctrines that have been compared by scholars to Herrnhutism -- such

[37] On Swedenborg and the Zinzendorf Moravians, see Bergquist, *Diary*, pp. 31-4. On Moravian evangelizing in the Americas, see D. C. Stange, 'A Compassionate Mother to Her Poor Negro Slaves: The Lutheran Church and Negro Slavery in Early America', *Phylon*, 24(3) (1968) p. 279.
[38] K. Davies, 'The Swedishman at Brother Brockmer's: Moravians and Swedenborgians in eighteenth-century London', in S. McNeilly (ed.) *Philosophy, Literature and Mysticism: an anthology of essays on Swedenborg's thought and influence* (London, 2013), p. 389.
[39] Davies, *Swedishman*, p. 389. For Swedenborg's reference to the 'pious shoemaker', see Bergquist, *Diary*, §197, p. 229.
[40] Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 54.
[41] Davies, *Swedishman*, p. 389. For evidence of Senft's presence at Brockmer's, see Swedenborg's own entry about Senft in Bergquist, *Diary*, §197, p. 229.
[42] Davies, *Swedishman*, p. 388.

as a regenerative divine influx, or emphasis on a revivalist childlike attitude to worship -- actually predated his exposure to Moravianism in London.[43] Nevertheless, not everyone in the Brethren was sympathetic to Swedenborg's views and ideas at the time, and his stay at Brockmer's has been subject to controversy due to the latter's testimony published decades later. Brockmer's writings were transcribed by two anti-Swedenborgians: the Moravian John Wesley (a member of the religious Fetter Lane Society) and Aaron Mathesius, the pastor of the London Swedish church. Both alleged through articles in the *Arminian Magazine* in 1781 and 1796 that while staying at Brockmer's, Swedenborg had experienced a delusional messianic breakdown in May 1744.[44] According to Wesley and Mathesius (a personal enemy of Swedenborg's) Swedenborg was struck by a 'delirious fever' which lasted four days, eventually leading him to proclaim himself as the new Messiah, chosen by God to convert the Jews, foaming and strongly stammering. After staying for two days in his room and refusing to see a doctor, Swedenborg allegedly ran away from Brockmer's house, rolling himself naked in mire and throwing away the money in his pockets.[45] Wesley concluded that there was no doubt that Swedenborg's daily conversations with spirits headed back to this delirious episode.[46]

However, Swedenborg's diary did not record any mental breakdown in that period, and instead he recorded a process of spiritual transformation. Despite allusions at the time to great stress, intense spiritual questioning and disillusionment with his anatomical work, Swedenborg had written at the beginning of April 1744 that 'during all these experiences I was in varied company as usual, and no one could [observe] the least change in me' (§80). Moreover, the isolated and retrospective nature of the testimony by his opponents,

[43] Bergquist, *Diary*, pp. 234-5.
[44] Davies, *Swedishman*, p. 389. For a detailed discussion of those accounts, see Tafel, *Documents* II, pp. 581-612.
[45] For a summary of this controversy, see Bergquist, *Diary*, pp. 53-9. Bergquist argues in favour of the veracity of the testimony, although the elements which he gives in favour of it seem rather unconclusive. For Wesley's testimony, see Davies, *Swedishman*, pp. 389-90.
[46] Davies, *Swedishman*, p. 388.

along with variations between the 1781 and 1796 versions, suggest that his alleged mental crisis was largely exaggerated. An entry around 15 May 1744 in the Fetter Lane archives further indicate that 'the Swedishman at Br. Brokmer's [sic], that was lately besides himself is now better again, and goes out'.[47] The expression 'besides himself' had similarly been applied to the asylum confinement of English poet Christopher Smart, which had been brought by his opponents and creditors, at a time where accusations of madness were commonplace to discredit or silence dissenting views.[48]

According to his French follower Benedict Chastanier, Swedenborg claimed that rumours about his madness had been spread by revengeful Herrnhutists in response to his critique of Moravavianism in his *De Continuatio de Ultimo Judicio* (Amsterdam, 1763).[49] However, his private records suggest that Swedenborg's feud with some London Moravians started much earlier, in fact as soon as 20 May 1744, when he recorded with bitterness the Moravian's claims that they are the 'true Lutherans', and that this made him feel like 'I may not yet be permitted to join their brotherhood'.[50] Swedenborg also entered in a disagreement with the Moravian pastor of Fetter Lane James Hutton, who required Swedenborg to confess before taking communion, while the latter contended that only God could absolve someone from his sins.[51] Later on, in October 1744, Swedenborg commented on the Moravian's reluctance to welcome his ideas, recording that 'he was there, but not accepted' in the Moravian Church.[52] Those statements have sometimes been interpreted by scholars as evidence that Swedenborg had unsuccessfully sought to be admitted in the Brethren. Regardless of whether this was the case, Swedenborg ended up never joining the brethren. Moreover, he soon came to hold

[47] Davies, *Swedishman*, p. 388.
[48] Mounsey, *Clown of God*, p. 200. On accusations of madness as a strategy to discredit during the 18th century, see M. Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* trans. R. Howard (London, 1989), p. 6 and pp. 38-64.
[49] Tafel, *Documents* II, p. 603.
[50] Bergquist, *Diary*, §202, p. 234. See also §264, pp. 299-300.
[51] Bergquist, *Diary*, pp. 267-8.
[52] Bergquist, *Diary*, §264, p. 300.

strongly negative views about the London Moravians, writing that 'all that they [Moravians] call truths are falsities' while in the spiritual world, Zinzendorf's true identity was that of a skillful persuader yet a deceptive fool, a secretly 'Arian' and Socinian heretic who rejected charity and deeds, 'despised all others who were not of his religion', and regarded the Old testament (along with Swedenborg's exegeses of it) as of 'no value'.[53] Along with such criticisms, the Moravians' insistence on the vicariousness of Christ's death, the rejection of good deeds, and the importance of confession and the Trinity proved to be irreconcilable points of contention for Swedenborg. Nevertheless, he would remain drawn to the Herrnhutists proactive and global evangelicalism, and his own theology would soon share their missionary ambitions to unite gentiles, Jews, and Christians under one universal banner.

2) Swedenborg's spiritual transformation: the Scheringson manuscript (1743-1744)

a) Self-examination, sins, sex, and the pursuit of women-muses

As seen in the third chapter, part of Swedenborg's stay with the Moravian community in London coincided with a period of deep spiritual questioning. However, this process started before his stay there, and continued long after he severed ties with the Moravian community of Fetter Lane: the dated entries were recorded unequally across seven months, from March 1744 until December 1744, with a peak of activity in March and April 1744 while still in the Hague, and then in October 1744.[54] As seen in the previous chapter, private records of such questioning are featured in the Scheringson manuscript, and constitute an intimate counterpart to Swedenborg's soul-body efforts at the time.

[53] Bergquist *Secret*, p. 205 and ES, §5993 and §5995. On Zinzendorf as an Arian heretic, see UJ(C), §38.3.
[54] Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 9.

In his private journal, Swedenborg examined the motives behind his research on soul-body and his state of spiritual development through critical self-examination related to various sins across his journal. Despite having been dismissed by Martin Luther in the Smalcald articles (1537) and Lutheran confessions, the trope of the seven deadly sins remained commonplace as a category for self-examination.[55] The most discussed categories in his journal are lust, pride and greed, while gluttony, anger, envy and sloth are less prevalent.[56]. A cathartic work of self-examination and religious confession, the journal provides an explicit discussion of Swedenborg's sexual inclinations and fantasies, written in an intimate register which shows the gradual construction of his views about love, promiscuity, the gendered body and the spiritual significance of desire and sexual intercourse.

More broadly, those intimate records point towards an early modern attitude and interpretations of desire, gender and sexuality through the codes of Baroque tropes, which requires careful contextualizing to avoid major misinterpretations.[57] Most of the time, sexual acts and women mentioned in Swedenborg's manuscript are allegorical: they stand as eroticised pursuits of knowledge, dilemmas, virtues, research, reflections, vexations and ideas, personified as women-muses through prosopopoeia.[58] When analyzing such allegorised personifications, it should be noted that 'personification' as a term did not exist in books of ancient rhetoric and did not appear before the eighteenth century.[59] The phenomenon was categorised as either prosopopoeia, *conformatio, fictio personae* or *ab animali ad inanimale*, 'from the living to the non-living'.[60] This was an almost automatic habit for trained poets like Swedenborg, and has been shown to be more broadly typical

[55] M. Luther, *Smalcald articles*, III. §36–8: 'man cannot weigh, distinguish, or differentiate sins; all sins manifest total corruption'.
[56] On pride, see Bergquist, *Diary*, see love of self §270; love of rank §165. On greed, see Broman §40, love of wealth §165. On gluttony, see *commessatione*s §188. On anger, see so angry with Satan it offends the Lord, §159.
[57] This leads to readings where Swedenborg 'practiced' kabbalistic sex magic, such as in Schuchard, *Secret Agent*.
[58] See for instance §129, §169, §178, §212, §261.
[59] H. Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik*, II (Munich, 1960), p. 932.
[60] Helander, *Ludus Heliconius*, pp.37-8 and Lausberg 1960, §559, §829.

of the Baroque mentality.[61] In practice, little is known about Swedenborg's sexual partners and habits, apart from later accounts from acquaintances referring to an unfaithful mistress in his youth, and a possible mistress in Italy.[62] Swedenborg was moreover infatuated with at least three other women through his life, with whom he however never consumed.[63] Overall, Swedenborg's self-examination of his allegorised *representationes*, thoughts and dreams are indistinguishable from the pursuit of his work and spiritual growth.

Such an entanglement is clear early on in the manuscript: the first entries analyze Swedenborg's unprecedented loss of sexual desire (§12) which was puzzling to him as he candidly recorded that 'I was not inclined towards sexual relations, which I had been all my days' (§12) and 'how my inclination towards women, which had been my chief passion, so suddenly ceased' (§14). Such remarks should be understood in the light of what women stand for in Swedenborg's manuscript: his loss of sexual desire is directly correlated to a loss of faith in his soul-body research (§14), represented to him by a lack of lust for the women-muses who personify knowledge.[64] Similarly, Swedenborg recorded reignited sexual desire for multiple women, each representing one of his anatomical manuscripts (§212), a clearly standard representation for him since 'all the objects of the sciences have represented themselves to me by means of women' (§213).[65] The unborn results of such pursuits also relate to his work: a representation of a stillborn deceased baby (§216-217) stands for Swedenborg's unpublished works on the brain and on the five *sensibus internis* (§217).

[61] Helander, *Swedenborg's Latin*, pp. 38-9.
[62] On the mistress in his youth, see C. Robsahm, *Memoirs of Swedenborg and other documents*, S. McNeilly and Anders Hallengren (eds.) (London, 2011) p. 16. On mistress in Italy, see *idem* p. 114.
[63] On Swedenborg's broken engagement to Emerentia Polhem, his unsuccessful proposal to Christina Maria Steuch and his love for Elizabeth Gyllenborg (née Stierncrona), see Robsahm, *Memoirs*, pp. 60-1.
[64] For such references of personifications, see Bergquist, *Diary*, §129, §134, §179.
[65] Acton, *Introduction to the Word Explained*, p. 64. Quoting ES, §3963, §2665. See also AC, §59, §968, §5863.

Parallels between the pursuit of love and the pursuit of work were not only a common poetic simile at the time: they had been occurring early on in Swedenborg's previous writings on soul-body, such as in his manuscript *Transactio prima de Anima et ejus et Corporis Harmonia in genere* (1741) where he wrote: that '[Nature] awaits for herself a man of genius, trained by experiments, disciplined by the sciences and study […] to whom in her day she will betroth herself; and I prophesy that she will then yield to the darts of love and join him in covenant and in bed'.[66] In his *Oeconomia*, he had also employed various marital metaphors (§323, II) such as comparing the mind to a 'marriage bed', with the liberty of acting as the wife, and the understanding being the man (§323, II). In a series of typical metaphors about knowledge personified as female entities and muses, he also stated that 'matter desires form as the female desires the male' in a reference to the first book of Aristotle's *Natura Auscultationae*.[67] This original take on the commonplace Baroque personifications of knowledge more broadly points to Swedenborg's strong belief that truth cannot be accessed without form. This is why he contended, God incarnated himself under human form, and why naked truths are represented by naked virgins, while with form they become clothed by the garments of words.

b) Women, gender shifts, and unfulfilled sex as political commentaries

Nevertheless, women-muses not only provided insights on Swedenborg's anatomical research: they also allowed for allegorical commentaries on the dubious morality of the Swedish political life, in a manner redolent of Linnaeus's *Nemesis Divina*. Women in Swedenborg's journal point both to higher virtues and ideals, but also warn against dangerous promiscuity. As a result, men protagonists occasionally experience gender-shifts, according to which side they lean on. For instance, the new crown prince Adolph

[66] Acton, *Psychological Transactions*, p. 55.
[67] *OERA*, §286, II, p. 267.

Frederick appears changed into a woman (§21) who stands as a 'governess of the court' (§22) for the recently deceased Queen Ulrika Eleonora (died 1741) who in turn symbolises wisdom.[68] The depiction of Adolph Frederick as a woman point to Swedenborg's favourable views about the newly-elected prince, in contrasts to the alcoholic and adulterous king Frederick I. Erland Broman, Frederick's court marshal and 'minister of pleasure' who famously provided sexual partners and prostitutes to the king, would later be similarly associated with a 'hell of rape and excrements'.[69] In March 1744, Swedenborg recorded Frederick as giving away jewels to his official mistress, the recently deceased Hedvig Taube (died 11 February 1744) who in return dismissed them as of insufficient quality (§22). This was interpreted by Swedenborg as referring to the disclosing of truths and secrets inappropriately shared by the king with Taube (§23).

Political criticism through gender-shifts sometimes directly translate warnings that Swedenborg should follow: in April 1744 Swedenborg recorded how he saw himself sexually attracted to a woman who turned out to be the Cap politician and historian Johan Arckenholtz (1695-1777) 'in a woman's shape' (§120). Arckenholtz had opposed Sweden's alliance with France and been imprisoned for his opinions on the war of Sweden against Russia, sharing similar political opinions to Swedenborg's.[70] Swedenborg recorded in his entry that Arckenholtz's vagina seemed to have 'some set of teeth' which prevented sexual intercourse to happen.[71] Swedenborg interpreted this as a warning that he should perhaps 'not get involved in politics' for his own safety, or possibly try refraining from 'touching any women' (§120), either meaning personified

[68] Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 100.
[69] Bergquist, *Diary*, pp. 97-8. As pointed by Bergquist, Erland Broman is mentioned along his brother Carl, who had financial dealings with Swedenborg.
[70] Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 181.
[71] For another reference to a 'dented vagina', see §261.

political secrets or actual carnal temptations in a court perceived as sexually promiscuous.

Unfulfilled sex and temptation are recurring themes in Swedenborg's notes, to which he assigned a wide range of meanings. In May 1744, Swedenborg noted in his journal that he had 'fallen into many pernicious thoughts' and that 'I cannot restrain myself not to look for sex, although I had no intention to proceed into effect'. This entry seemed to allude to himself going to a brothel as an observer along with Niklas Oelreich (1699-1770. §283-284), a former student of Andreas Rydelius and a Hats sympathiser travelling Europe, who became the director of the Swedish Board of Censors (1746-1767) when Swedenborg's anonymity as a seer would be broken in Sweden.[72] In a series of nocturnal *representationes* experienced during 'eleven hours of sleep', Swedenborg recorded how he was pursued by a married woman but was saved, which means that 'the Lord is saving me from temptations and persecutions' (§177). A similar pattern occurs when Swedenborg wrote 'I wanted to do something with a couple', yet 'nothing happened' (§167). Unfulfilled sex often relates to discussion of his works and dilemmas, personified as two romantic partners: for instance, Swedenborg interpreted his thoughts of being in love with two women as an indication that he was in two minds about various topics (§129). An entry in which Swedenborg teases a beautiful girl who gives her consent to be sexually touched by physician Johan Moreus (1672-1742, Swedenborg's former preceptor) was seen as an instruction 'to inform myself on the subject of the muscles and study these' (§126). In another entry, Swedenborg lies with a 'whore' in the presence of fellow *Bergscollegium* assessor Johan Bergenstierna (husband to the widow of Swedenborg's late brother Eliezer) with the prostitute boasting that Swedenborg is 'so strong', referring to his erected sex (§231). Swedenborg's interprets this as a sign he has 'boasted in the past' about his 'work' and that no one but God can absolve nor 'deliver'

[72] Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 233. See also *SBL*, 'Niclas von Oelreich'.

him now. This last point also confirmed him in his belief that confession before communion was superfluous, a view he would maintain until the end of his life and which would become a source of conflict with Swedish ecclesiastical authorities.[73]

Finally, foreshadowing his later controversial treatise *De Amore Conjugiali* (1768), Swedenborg interpreted an entry where the climactic desire of a sexual intercourse leads to possible pregnancy (§171) as a representation of 'utmost love for the Holy One', while concluding that a 'pure' 'ejaculation' answers to the 'love of wisdom' (§172). Swedenborg appeared aware of the potentially controversial character of his views, adding that 'nothing must be said of this, and it must come to no one ears; for in the understanding of the world it is impure, though in itself it is pure' (§172). Although we have seen that the journal's records point to a private exercise in self-examination where sexual desire is interpreted both as a source of insights for his soul-body research and a source of warnings against the dangers of Swedish political life, another theme of the journal is crucial during this period: Swedenborg's own spiritual transformation.

c) Spiritual transformation and anatomical disillusionment (March-December 1744)

In March 1744, Swedenborg began dating entries for his spiritual experiences until 21 December 1744, with many entries alluding to a gradual process of spiritual transformation which, as we have seen, he had been theorizing for years. The features of this transformation over several months include various loss of control over his body, for instance during prayer, where Swedenborg felt his hands were 'twice pressed firmly together by an external force' (§53, §155, §82-83), trembling repeatedly (§209, §228), lifted up (§209), while sometimes his knees would start to move by themselves (§108), or his whole body (§157), with words were put into his mouth during prayer (§55). Tremors

[73] Bergquist, *Diary*, pp. 267-8.

and trembling are mentioned repeatedly through the manuscript and are associated with the presence of the divine (§56, §209, §228) and the disclosure of divine truths to the elect. Such an idea not only echoed Swedenborg's early works on the vibratory nature of the human soul, but also well-known biblical passages from e.g. Psalms 77:17-18; 97:4-5 and 104:32 which he would later discuss in his *Arcana Coelestia* (§8816).[74] This led him to conclude that God wanted him to surrender passively (§266) while he followed up such manifestations by gradual measures of purification, such as breathing-exercises (§111-§112), fasting and light mortification (§158).

Those processes of purification were equated in April 1744 with the process of purifying metals from his former metallurgical work (§114-§116), along with a dismissal of the value of his own anatomical research (§119, §278). In April 1744, Swedenborg felt that he was being instructed to leave and not come back to his *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* (§119) viz. the soul-body work meant to be pursued by his current *Regnum Animale* series, thus casting doubt on whether he would ever complete his 17-volume soul-body work. While still in the Hague, Swedenborg felt that seeing 'men and women sitting on a ship ready to depart' meant that 'I shall send my work to England and will be led to a place where I can enjoy myself there' (§176). Perhaps this was a factor in moving to print his last *Regnum Animale* materials in London. Whether or not this was the case, it is there that Swedenborg experienced a loss of faith in his analytical method. The compilation of other authors supplemented by his own analyses was now seen as of little value, being compared to *kram*, viz. 'small wares' or trash (§278). Instead, Swedenborg should focus on a work in which Christ is always with him (§276): his long-standing project of a doctrinal work on the worship and love of God (§276, §278). The instruction 'Do not rely on others' echoed an earlier entry where Swedenborg felt called to 'not read other theologians' (§180), an encouragement to more strongly voice the ideas which he felt

[74] Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 127.

called to reveal. In a crucial entry of the Scheringson manuscript, Swedenborg recorded seeing a spirit whom he believed to be Jesus Christ, and who asked Swedenborg whether the latter was insane (§54). Feeling humbled and unsure, Swedenborg wrote 'Lord, thou knowest better than I do', a reply which was met by a laconic call to action: 'Well, then act!' (§54). This instruction led Swedenborg speculating about its meaning, being either an instruction to love Christ, or to fulfill a promise he had made, perhaps to move on to his new theological work. On another occasion, the holy spirit purified him 'all night' (§55), while he recorded 'ecstasies' during the night from Easter Monday to Easter Tuesday (§48). This led Swedenborg to wonder whether his deceased father might be calling him to take holy orders (§58), although he eventually decided to spread his own theology independently.

Overall, these experiences were interpreted as a transformative tribulation which Swedenborg was subjected to by God (§42). Such a transformation eventually conferred him new powers: Swedenborg was now able to experience prolonged states of wakeful apneic ecstasy, including some of the earliest mentions of his access to the spiritual world (§44, §97): 'I woke up and fell asleep a number of times; and everything was in response to my thoughts […] I was in heaven, and I heard a speech that no human tongue can utter, nor can anyone describe the glory and bliss of that life. Apart from this I was wakeful in heavenly ecstasy, which is ineffable too (§44)'. Sleepless night before a conversion were a trope amongst seventeenth century Protestants.[75] Arising 'as a whole God' (§157), Swedenborg now felt transformed with a renewed sense of self-confidence, writing about how individuals disrespectful to him would certainly act differently if only they knew the grace which he was enjoying (§75). From October 1744 onwards, Swedenborg noted that he had become 'handsome like an angel' (§268) and had gained a 'sharp eyesight' (§260) while reading the small printed verses of his Castellio 1726 Latin edition of the Bible

[75] Rirye, *Sleeping*, p. 78.

bought in London.[76] The Castellio version was named after French sixteenth century Calvinist theologian and translator Sébastien Châteillon (1515-1563), who was known for his strong stance in favour of religious toleration, and his lively, creative, yet controversial translation of the Bible.[77] It is meaningful that Swedenborg chose to rely on Castellio's version during his time in London as it was known for trying to restore the true meaning of the Word when the Hebrew was 'corrupt' through various philological conjectures.[78] Swedenborg relied on Castellio's version to compose his first exegetical works *De Messiah Venturo in Mundum*, before reverting to his usual Schmidius Bible after his return to Sweden.[79] Swedenborg's interest and use of the Castellio version during his first works of exegesis point to his growing interest in sacred philology and getting to the true essence of the Hebrew word.

3) The year 1745: cancellation of the *Regnum Animale* series, poetry, Biblical exegesis, memorabilia

a) Impact of the reviews of *Regnum Animale* on Swedenborg's research

At the beginning of the year 1745, Swedenborg published the third volume of his *Regnum Animale*.[80] Titled *Regnum Animale- Pars Tertia-* (1745) and subtitled 'a part on touch, taste and organic forms in general', Swedenborg's last anatomical treatise was wrapped up rather hastily and printed in February 1745, following his previous inspiration that he should discontinue the work, especially the methodology of compiling other authors, in favour of relying only on his own and on Christ.[81] However, his dismissal of the method on which he had based his entire research programme did not

[76] On the Bible versions used by Swedenborg during his time in London, see Bergquist, *Diary*, p. 297 and A. Acton *Concerning the Messiah About to Come* (Bryn Athyn, 1949), vi.
[77] J. Roubaud, 'Traduire pour les idiots : Sébastien Châteillon et la Bible', *Sciences Religieuses*, 89(3) (2001), pp. 353-76. On toleration, see pp. 360-1. On the Bible, see p. 373.
78 D. Barthelemy, *Studies in the Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Hebrew Old Testament Text Project* (Winona Lake, 2012) pp. 12-3.
79 On Swedenborg reverting to Schmidius in Sweden, see Acton, *Concerning the Messiah*, vi.
[80] Ryder, II, p. 60.
[81] Bergquist, *Diary*, pp. 313-4, §278.

arise from mere spiritual considerations. Indeed, at the time when Swedenborg finally decided to give up on his anatomical series, negative reviews about his *Regnum Animale* series had just started to emerge.

A first scathing review, which called Swedenborg's soul-body system 'incomprehensible', had been published in the summer of 1744 in the *Bibliothèque Raisonnée* from Amsterdam.[82] Although Swedenborg seemed to be a 'great philosopher' endowed with admirable 'sagacity', the reviewer argued that the reader 'balks at and is utterly discouraged' by the work's lengthy quotations, while Swedenborg's 'applications of his principles' often 'obscures the subject instead of clarifying it'.[83] Swedenborg's soul was described as a Leibnizian 'spiritual automaton', lacking notice of any of the objections raised against Leibniz's soul-body system by scholars such as the 'great' Pierre Bayle, the Dutch mathematician Willem Jacob's Gravesande or the Huguenot minister David Renaud Boulier.[84] The reviewer lamented Swedenborg's view that the soul presides 'without knowing what it is doing' over the formation of the human body, implying that it acts as a 'blind power' utterly contrary to reason.[85] On 1 October 1744, another shorter review in *Neue Zeitungen* concluded that Swedenborg either followed the anatomists who deal 'incorrectly' with the organs described, or 'unhesitatingly brings in passages from the anatomists in which is found the very opposite of what he sets forth in his own text'.[86] Four weeks later (26-27 October), Swedenborg wrote in his own journal that his compilation-based anatomical method was 'trash', and indeed needed to be abandoned.[87]

[82] Acton, *Scientific reviewers*. (1932) p. 117.
[83] Acton, *Scientific reviewers* (1932), p. 115. 'I esteem his knowledge and admire his sagacity' p. 119.
[84] Acton, *Scientific reviewers* (1932), pp. 118-9.
[85] Acton, *Scientific reviewers* (1932), pp. 118-9.
[86] 'Swedenborg and his scientific reviewers, The Animal Kingdom vol. I and II', *The New Philosophy*, January (1933), p. 142.
[87] See Bergquist, *Diary*, §278.

Seven months after the publication of *Regnum Animale* part III, another negative review in *Neue Zeitungen* on 23 September 1745 came as a nail in the coffin for Swedenborg. The reviewer described the work as typical of the author's style, 'with many pages concerning a matter on which very little depends, while having nothing to say'. The reviewer further derided Swedenborg's tendency to express well-known things 'in an obscure way' and dismissed the part on organic forms as being 'beyond the understanding of most readers'. Finally, the reviewer concluded that Swedenborg seemed set to 'make a name for himself by all kinds of peculiar theories, and with little danger of incurring suspicion that he has borrowed them from others'.[88] Yet, during the course of those seven months, Swedenborg had already moved on to a new soul-body project, more in tune with his new spiritual calling.

b) From anatomy to inspired poetry: *De Cultu et Amore Dei* as a continuation of *Regnum Animale* III

As soon as the first negative reviews of his anatomical work prompted him to cut down the size of his *Regnum Animale* series from seventeen to three volumes, Swedenborg refocused his efforts towards the publication of a new poetic work *I Gudz namn* ('in the name of God'), primarily dealing with *De Cultu Dei* and *De Amore*.[89] To do so, he left aside the draft materials for the following volumes of *Regnum Animale* which he had already produced: the unfinished sequels *Anatomia Corporis* (1743) and *De Senso Communi* (1744).[90]. However, scholars have surprisingly overlooked how Swedenborg crafted his new doctrinal poem *De Cultu et Amore Dei* (London, 1745) as a form of synthetic conclusion to his anatomical work. Swedenborg had been working on both his *Regnum Animale III* and *De Cultu et Amore Dei* since at least October 1744, and he was

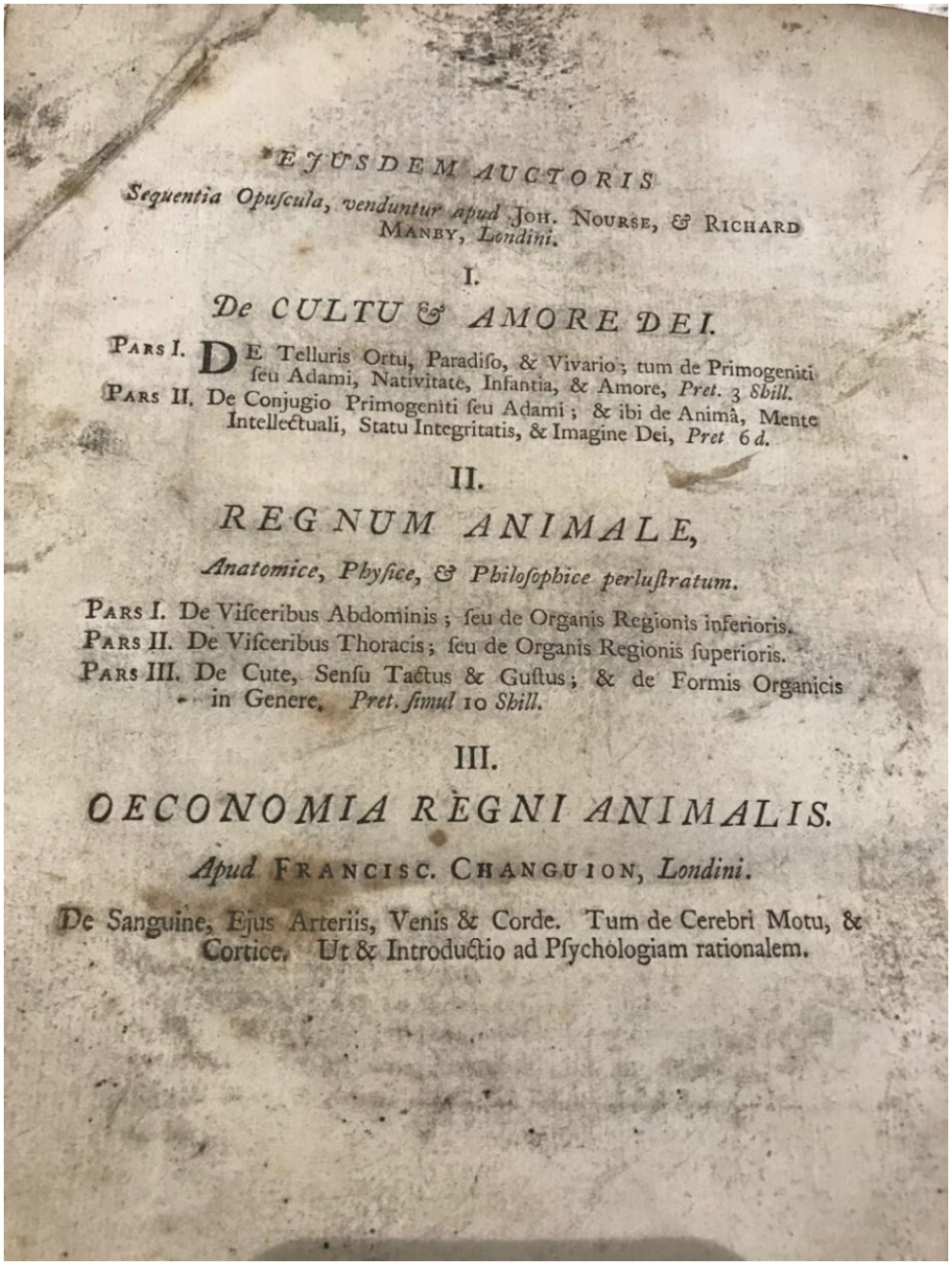
[88] Acton, *Scientific reviewers* (1933) p. 179.
[89] Bergquist, *Diary*, §278. See also Ryder, II, p. 82.
[90] Those two works were later posthumously published as prospective parts IV and V of Swedenborg's *Regnum Animale* series.

eager to sell and send the two works together, especially since *De Cultu* represented his first move from his discarded compilation-based anatomical methodology.

The role of *De Cultu* as a conclusion to Swedenborg's anatomical soul-body research is not only exemplified by its soul-body content, but also by his change of publisher. Moreover, type fonts and ornaments clearly indicate that, although no publisher was listed in *Regnum Animale III*'s first edition, it was produced by London publishers John Nourse and Richard Manby, whom Swedenborg also entrusted with the publication of the two parts of *De Cultu et Amore Dei*. [91] Moreover, Nourse and Manby sold all three volumes of Swedenborg's *Animale* along with the two volumes of his *De Cultu et Amore Dei*, as demonstrated by a catalogue inserted at the end of *De Cultu*'s first edition (see Figure 19).

[91] Ryder, II, p. 60. *De Cultu* Part 2 was published in early March 1745, and Swedenborg wrote a Part 3 which was never published, and remained under manuscript form unfinished.

FIGURE 19 : Catalogue at the end of the first edition of *De Cultu et Amore Dei*. Nourse & Manby advertised the three parts of *Regnum Animale* (including the two first parts published by Blyvenburg) and referred in contrast to Swedenborg's *Oeconomia* being sold by Changuion. The Swedenborg Society.



EJUSDEM AUCTORIS

Sequentia Opuſcula, venduntur apud JOH. NOURSE, & RICHARD MANBY, *Londini.*

I.

De CULTU & AMORE DEI.

PARS I. DE Telluris Ortu, Paradiſo, & Vivario; tum de Primogeniti ſeu Adami, Nativitate, Infantia, & Amore, *Pret.* 3 *Sbill.*

PARS II. De Conjugio Primogeniti ſeu Adami; & ibi de Animâ, Mente Intellectuali, Statu Integritatis, & Imagine Dei, *Pret* 6 *d.*

II.

REGNUM ANIMALE,

Anatomice, Phyſice, & Philoſophice perluſtratum.

PARS I. De Viſceribus Abdominis; ſeu de Organis Regionis inferioris.

PARS II. De Viſceribus Thoracis; ſeu de Organis Regionis ſuperioris.

PARS III. De Cute, Senſu Tactus & Guſtus; & de Formis Organicis in Genere. *Pret. ſimul* 10 *Sbill.*

III.

OECONOMIA REGNI ANIMALIS.

Apud FRANCISC. CHANGUION, *Londini.*

De Sanguine, Ejus Arteriis, Venis & Corde. Tum de Cerebri Motu, & Cortice. Ut & Introductio ad Pſychologiam rationalem.

Just after their publication, Swedenborg presented both *Regnum Animale III* and *De Cultu* part I to the Royal Society on 28 February 1745. [92] Swedenborg also sent Martin

[92] Ryder, II, p. 63.

Folkes a copy of both his *Regnum Animale* 1-2 and *De Cultu et Amore Dei*. [93] On 11 March 1745, Swedenborg similarly wrote to Preis from London to present him with copies of his *De Cultu*.[94] *De Cultu* was Swedenborg's first major poetic work since his *Camena Borea* of 1715, which he had then devoted to the general Gustaf Cronhielm (1664-1737). However, *De Cultu* is closer in Latin style, syntax and themes to Swedenborg's natural philosophical works from 1734 to 1741 than to his early poetic works.[95] Moreover, thematic parallels are found between *De Cultu* and Swedenborg's natural philosophical works *Principia Rerum Naturalium* (1734) and *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* (1740-1741).[96] *De Cultu* was the last work of Swedenborg which openly embraced the form and stylistics of poetry. Afterwards, he would restrict the use of allegorical personifications to the exposition of his doctrines in his memorabilia of the spiritual world. The work has been thoroughly analysed and contextualised, thus for the sake of our study, we will only mention the most relevant aspects to our argument.[97]

4) Hexameral poetry and Swedenborg's literary influences in England

a) Literary influences, context, and content of *De Cultu*

In the same way that his *Festivus Applausus* and *Camena Borea* had belonged to the specific genre of panegyric political allegories in vogue during the Swedish Carolinian Age, *De Cultu* belonged to the genre of hexameral poetry, a poetic paraphrasing of the six days of creation described in Genesis. In Swedenborg's Swedish context, the Lutheran bishop and poet Haquin Spegel (1645-1714) had written the major hexameral

[93] *Regnum Animale vol III*: Catalogue of the Library of Martin Folkes. p. 11/168. Quarto section, number 79. *Regnum Animale vol. I and II*: *ibid*, p. 18/168. Quarto section, number 341. *De Cultu et Amore Dei* : *ibid*, p. 21/168. Quarto section, number 459.
[94] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 499.
[95] See A. Erikson, 'Some observations on the style of Swedenborg' *The New Philosophy*, 90(3) (1987), pp. 379-85; Helander, *Festivus Applausus*, pp. 30-1.
[96] See Lamm, *Development*, pp. 162, 165.
[97] See Jonsson, *Drama*, pp. 3-26, particularly pp. 10-3, and Lamm, *Development*, pp. 160-94. See also F. M. Crasta, Follesa and L. Follesa, 'The Arcanes of the World. Symbols and Mystical-Allegorical Exegesis in Emanuel Swedenborg's *De Cultu et Amore Dei*' in P. Forshaw, *Lux in Tenebris: The Visual and the Symbolic in Western Esotericism* (Leiden, 2017), pp. 220-39.

poem in Swedish in 1685, titled *Gudz verk och hvila* (*God's work and rest*).[98] However, the most famous hexameral work in Swedenborg's time was still *Paradise Lost* (1667) of John Milton, whom Swedenborg listed as one of the 'grand English poets worth reading on account of their inventions', along with 'John Dryden, Edmund Spenser, Edmund Waller, Abraham Cowley, Francis Beaumont, John Fletcher, William Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, John Oldham, John Denham, Katherine Philips and Edmund Smith'.[99] This list of authors highlights Swedenborg's familiarity with important early modern works of fiction and poetry beyond the Swedish sphere.

During the period when Swedenborg chose to write and publish his doctrinal prose-poem on creation in London, there was a wave of interest and literary discussions about Latin and English poetry based on the Hebrew Bible in England. *De Cultu et Amore Dei* was published during a decade where the biblical text was more liberally used for poetic production, before a return to a stricter climate in the 1760s which led to the rejection of versified translations of the Bible.[100] Four years before the publication of *De Cultu*, exegete and Biblical scholar Robert Lowth had given a series of lectures at Oxford where he rejected Aristotelian metrics, emphasizing instead that true poetry based on the Hebrew Bible needed to be free from rhyme and verse.[101] More broadly, on the side of scholarly debates about translation and versification, the biblical text provided a pivotal source of inspiration in sacred music, such as the extremely successful oratorio *Messiah* from Handel (1742), where biblical verses rearranged in Charles Jennens's libretto where sung verbatim.[102]

[98] See Jonsson, *Drama*, pp. 3-26, particularly pp. 10-3, and Lamm, *Development*, pp. 160-94.
[99] See Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 30.
[100] J. Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible: Translation, Scholarship, Culture* (Princeton, 2005) p. 149.
[101] Sheehan, *Enlightenment Bible*, p. 149.
[102] For additional context treating Handel and Swedenborg side-by-side, see R. Lines, 'Handel, Hogarth and Swedenborg: manners and morals in eighteenth century London', in S. McNeilly (ed.) *Philosophy, Literature and Mysticism* (London, 2013) p. 490.

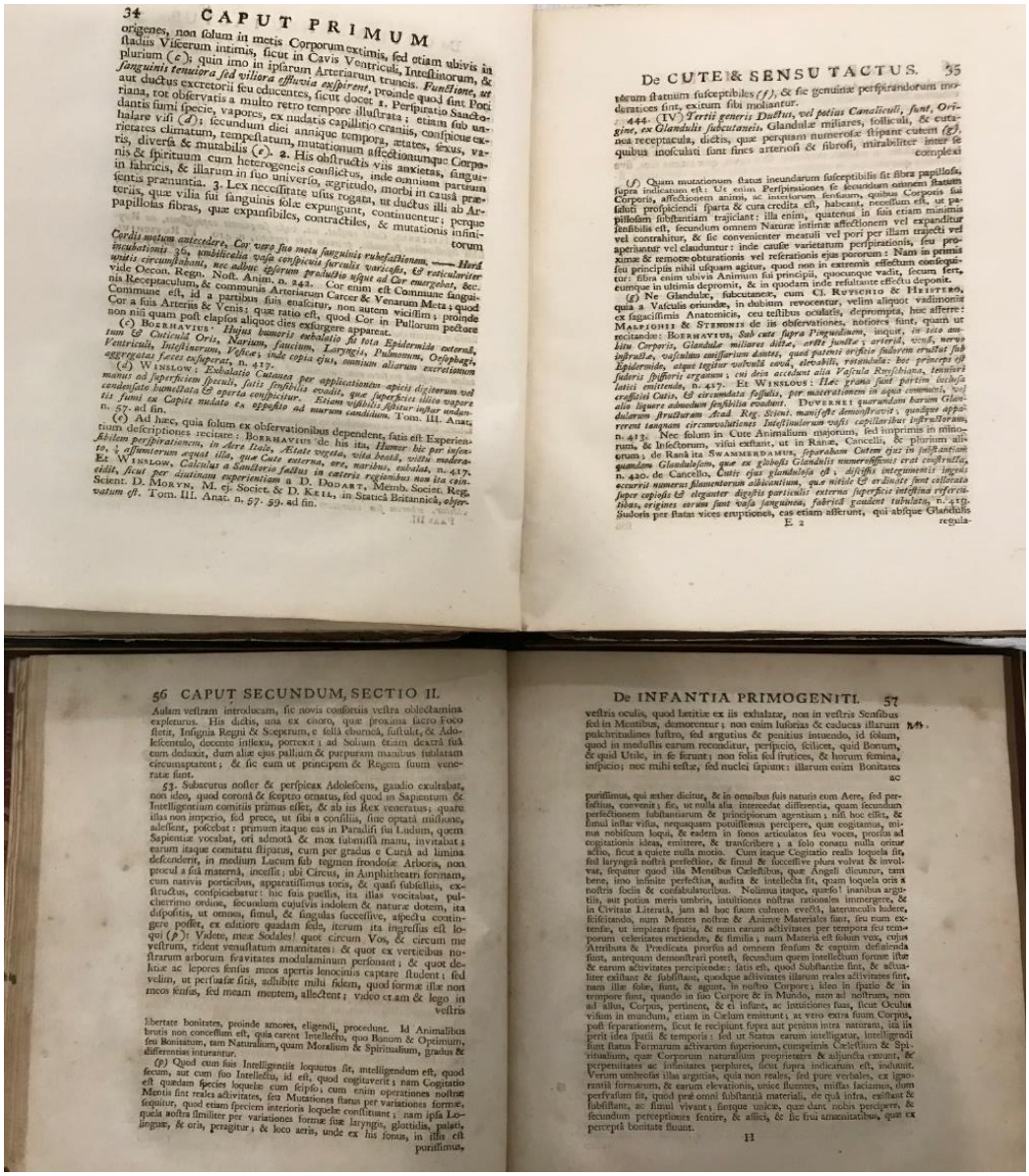
Familiar themes of the hexameral genre are well featured in *De Cultu*: the *veris perpetui* (perpetual spring) along with the correlation between seasons and the *mundus senescens* (the ageing world/the doctrines of the four ages of the world) similarly featured in Milton's *Naturam non pati senium*.[103] While exposing such themes, Swedenborg referred to *The Birds* of Aristophanes and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, his two main classical influences, to which he would later attribute inmost spiritual value.[104] The idea that the origin of the world was rooted in the primordial egg was influenced by classical references and the work *Telluris Theoria Sacra* of Thomas Burnet.[105] Similarly, the frequent references to the seeds across *De Cultu* are redolent of Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura*, an Epicurean form of atomism where 'solid and eternal' elementary particles consist of seeds.[106] Swedenborg's doctrine of seeds also evokes the cosmologies of Anaxagoras, Democritus and Leucippeus, which he had reviewed in his philosophical notebook through Malebranche's *De Veritate*.[107]

Nevertheless, despite such classical traits, *De Cultu* also represented a playful twist on the hexameral genre, as it did not consist in a mere allegorical commentary of the biblical creation, nor in a mere poetic paraphrasing of the six days of Genesis. Indeed, *De Cultu* was rather a work in which Swedenborg synthesised selected aspects of his natural philosophical and theological views into six 'scenes'.[108] Stylistically, although Swedenborg was done with quoting other authors, he could not refrain from inserting lengthy footnotes, sometimes even much longer than the actual text (see Figure 20) just like in his anatomical works. On some first-person sections, scholars have noted how this

[103] Helander, *Neo-Latin*, p. 451
[104] Lamm, *Development*, p.161. For reference to Ovid as a transcriber of Greek myths written in divine correspondences and originally transmitted by antediluvian Patriarch Enoch, see SS(P) §18, pp. 19-20.
[105] For reference to Swedenborg and Burnet, see Dunér, 'Swedenborg and the Plurality of Worlds: Astrotheology in the Eighteenth Century', *Zygon*, 51(2) (2016), p. 319.
[106] Crasta and Follesa, *Arcanes*, p. 227.
[107] *Notebook*, pp. 394-5. On the doctrine of seeds in Anaxagoras, Democritus and Leucippus, see Crasta and Follesa, *Arcanes*, p. 227.
[108] See Lamm, *Development*, p. 161.

nevertheless resulted in an innovative split style where the thoughts and speech of Adam occurred concurrently between poetry in the main text, and doctrinal explanations in lengthy footnotes.[109] Nevertheless, although *De Cultu* played with some of the more liberal stylistic conventions of its time, the work's idiosyncratic characteristics and ambiguous tone soon proved to be a topic of debate amongst Swedenborg's reviewers.

FIGURE 20 : Comparison of lengthy footnotes *in Regnum Animale*, II (above) and *De Cultu et Amore Dei*, I (below). Swedenborg's was done with quoting others, but not with verbose footnotes. The Swedenborg Society.



[109] On this split style in *De Cultu*, see Jonsson, *Visionary scientist*, p. 136.

b) Prosopopoeia in *De Cultu*: a forerunner to Swedenborg's memorabilia

In *De Cultu*, Swedenborg's theological convictions were personified in a narrativised form: the devil, referred as *Princeps mundi* (prince of this world) commands his chiefs *Amor sui* (love of the self) and *Amor mundi* (love of the world), allegories of the fight that mankind has to face between love of the world-self, versus *Amor Dei*, the love of God. The poem is also notable for featuring a prosopopoeia strikingly redolent of Swedenborg's later memorabilia, in which an angel under human form reveals to Eve the interaction between soul and body (§95). This angel, Swedenborg wrote, enlarged the fibres within her bosom up to an infinitesimal scale, to render visible the miniature brains (*cerebellula*) filled with Cartesian vortices which generate the animal spirits. Opening one of these *cerebellula*, the angel then revealed to Eve the *Animae nostrae adytum* (sanctuary of our soul) which presides over the generation of all organic forms (§95:3). [110] This didactical lesson in microcosmic anatomy was meant to instruct Eve (and the reader) about Swedenborg's doctrines through the powers of spiritual sight, going further than any eighteenth-century microscope. The passage concludes in a manner characteristic of eighteenth-century introductory lessons to women, while also repeating Swedenborg's recurring criticism of those who only believe through their external senses:

> That these things are so, thou, my daughter, who art born into this very order, and the light of its life, although thou art still a damsel, yet, as I see, thou clearly comprehendest; but it is otherwise with those whose wisdom is grounded only in the fatuous lumen of nature; they allow themselves to be persuaded by nothing but the testimony of the external senses; and what is wonderful, they reject from their belief the most evident actions and effects, unless they see them also in a substance […]

Overall, this allegory not only demonstrates Swedenborg's continuous engagement with soul-body interaction in *De Cultu*: it demonstrates how the very first versions of his later

[110] *De Cultu*, pp. 222-9.

memorabilia were initially published to spread the results of his soul-body research, in an ambiguous tone which soon puzzled Swedenborg's reviewers.

c) 'He does not offer it as revealed dogma' --- Reception of *De Cultu*, narrative of vocation, and the beginning of Swedenborg's Biblical studies

De Cultu was unequally received among critics: reviewers pointed the ambiguity of the work's nature and purpose, a recurring criticism amongst many readers of Swedenborg's later theological works.[111] In an issue of *Neue Zeitungen* from 16 September 1745, the reviewers noted the prevalent ovum-metaphysics, the location of paradise 'in the highest parts of the air, close to the sun', while the third part was 'setting up a menagerie quite incomprehensible to us' surveyed by 'a human soul [Adam] under human form'.[112] Beyond the mere content of the poem, the reviewer finally wondered about the ambiguous literary nature of the book, noting a discrepancy between Swedenborg's play-like structure in 'scenes' and the strange doctrines promoted to the reader: 'it appears as though Herr Swedenborg intended to write a play, since he has actually divided the work into scenes; and one could read his book as a pastime, if only his style had been that of a playwright'.[113]

A more positive review of *De Cultu* had appeared in the *Bibliothèque Raisonnée* in Amsterdam during April-June 1745.[114] The aesthetic qualities of the poem were praised, especially the motive of *mundus senescens*, while Swedenborg himself was celebrated as 'very original in his way of thinking'. [115] Nevertheless, the work was criticised for a lack of 'order' viewed as typical of Swedenborg's former anatomical works.[116] Like the critic from *Neue Zeitungen*, the reviewer pointed the literary ambiguity of *De Cultu*, wondering

[111] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 490.
[112] Acton, *Scientific reviewers* (1933) p. 249.
[113] Acton, *Scientific reviewers* (1933) p. 249.
[114] Acton, *Scientific reviewers* (1933) pp. 187-8.
[115] Acton, *Scientific reviewers* (1933) p. 187.
[116] Acton, *Scientific reviewers* (1933) p. 188.

whether 'Monsieur Swedenborg' was actually 'serious' in his statements: 'One will perhaps wonder whether the author of this work is speaking seriously, or whether his only design is to have the reader spend some pleasant moments of leisure in reading a story more ingenious than probable'.[117] The reviewer even wondered whether Swedenborg might be seeking to gain religious 'followers' although he concluded the poem was evidently not a work of 'revealed dogma':

> 'Swedenborg does not speak of his paradise in the same way [than Muhammad]; he does not offer it as revealed dogma; he is content with displaying it with pomp, adorned by the most sublime metaphysics. And if he hopes to have followers, he can scarcely expect to find them except among the most Systematic Philosophers.'[118]

Such a divide would prove long-lasting amongst Swedenborg's reviewers through the next fifteen years: if they were indeed nothing more than ingenious personifications playing with literary conventions, they might still constitute attempts to spread heterodox theological views through the guise of poetry. On the other hand, presenting it as 'revealed dogma' meant that religious followers could be gained, both for his soul-body research and his wider theological ideas.

Perhaps such reviews confirmed Swedenborg on the path of personifying his doctrines as conversations with angels would prove more efficient in reaching the apologetic goals which his former anatomical research had failed to fulfil. The late Andreas Rydelius, whom Swedenborg had quoted so much in his notebook, after all advocated narrativisations to spread moral doctrine and 'sound thoughts' in his *Nödiga förnufftz öfningar för all slags studerande ungdom, som wil hafwa sunda tanka* (1718). Since the seventeenth century, the popular dialogue of the dead genre routinely showcased conversations between deceased figures in the Elysean fields to tackle various theological

[117] Acton, *Scientific reviewers* (1933) p. 188.
[118] Acton, *Scientific reviewers* (1933) p. 188.

and philosophical topics.[119] At the same time, 'visions' from individuals claiming gifts of second sight were still commonly used to discuss controversial topics, such as the contemporary visions of John Ferguson (London, 1745) and the 'clergyman in the Island of Sky', who foretold various predictions and extraordinary events about the Jacobite rising of 1745.[120]

While reviews of his *De Cultu* were being released, Swedenborg recorded new instances of spiritual purification redolent of what he had described in the Scheringson manuscript. The most famous of those episodes, he wrote, took place while he was having lunch at an inn in London in April 1745.[121] In the years following Swedenborg's death, his followers Gabriel Beyer and Carl Robsahm both claimed that Swedenborg had moreover experienced a decisive 'vision of vocation' on the same day in April 1745, where the Lord manifested himself to him at night, 'in imperial purple and majestic light, sitting by his bed', and that it was on this occasion that Swedenborg's spiritual senses had been fully and permanently opened.[122] Although this period might have indeed been pivotal in Swedenborg's decision to reposition his work from the perspective of revealed theology, this episode was probably a retrospective construction, either by his followers or by Swedenborg himself, to provide a clear event to pinpoint the beginning of his new career as a divinely-commissioned exegete. Indeed, no mention of this 'vision' of Christ can be found in Swedenborg's manuscripts or writings at the time -- only a description of an experience of spiritual purification.[123]

The later part of the year 1745 was devoted to working on theological manuscripts. In the thirty pages long manuscript titled *Vari loci in Scriptura Sacra de Messiah Venturo in*

[119] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, pp. 488-9.
[120] Clergyman in the Island of Sky, *The Young Pretender's Destiny Unfolded […] Together with the Visions seen by John Ferguson, a Man endued with Second Sight, who has lived upon Water only these Twenty-Four years past* (London, 1745).
[121] AD, §3557. See also Benz, *Visionary Savant*, pp. 195-6.
[122] Benz, *Visionary Savant*, p. 196.
[123] AD, §1957 and §3557.

Mundum de Babylone etc, Swedenborg listed Bible passages about Christ's incarnation in the world, while its title and theme echoed Swedenborg's very first theological draft from 1733. The topic of incarnation, intrinsically linked to the relationship between the soul and the body, allowed him to further refine his positioning on the question of vicarious atonement, a doctrine he was slowly coming to reject. Similarly, while writing a thematic index of the Bible to facilitate his scripture studies, Swedenborg ventured for the first time in an exegesis of the first chapter of Genesis, comparing the texts of his Schmidius and Castellio Bibles with frequent references in his interpretation to what he had published in *De Cultu*. By writing his first exegeses of the books from the Old Testament, Swedenborg found a new way to fight materialistic philosophy, atheism and impiety, while continuing to emphasise the importance of the soul-body problem at the core of his theology. The result was a first short manuscript titled *Historia Creationis a Mose tradita* (1745) 'The history of creation according to Moses' which featured soul-body references via discussion of the 'human microcosm' of the 'heaven and nature' present in every man.[124] Swedenborg had similarly felt divinely commissioned to undertake this work, again *In Nomine Domini* ('in God's Name') following a dream (*somnium*) he had recorded in 1744.[125] This short study heralded Swedenborg's new major work of biblical exegesis, an unpublished study of various books of the Old Testament in three unpublished volumes titled *Explicatio in Verbum Historicorum Veteris Testamenti* (*The Word of the Old Testament Explained*, 1745-1746).

[124] A. Acton, *The History of Creation* (Bryn Athyn, 1928), p. 27, §37.
[125] Ryder, II, p. 82.

III. Soul-body in Swedenborg's theological studies, before and after his retirement

1) The soul of the Word: *Explicatio in Verbum Historicorum Veteris Testamenti* (1745-1746)

a) On exegesis and challenging the Biblical Canon

Like most exegetes, Swedenborg came to form strong opinions on the Biblical canon and the varying spiritual value of its different texts. His first major work of Biblical exegesis, the unpublished *Explicatio in Verbum Historicorum Veteris Testamenti* was written from October 1745 until November 1746 in three folio volumes, completed by a fourth volume on Isaiah and Jeremiah in 1747.[126] Although modern scholars long believed *Explicatio* to be a draft of Swedenborg's later *Arcana Coelestia* (1749-1756), it was actually a different work which he initially wanted to publish before scrapping it. Swedenborg began the work as a complete 'exposition' of the spiritual or internal sense of the Word interspersed with various topics, including the interaction of soul and body.[127] In contrast to the marginalia in his Schmidius Bible and his *Index Biblicus* which focused on the meaning of historical events and etymological considerations about the Hebrew Word, the methodology in *Explicatio* (1745-1746), like *Arcana Coelestia* (1749-1756), primarily focused on exposing the spiritual sense of the text (*sensus internus*).[128]

The idea that certain parts of the Word had unequal spiritual value had been of especial importance for the Reformation since Luther, and Swedenborg's Schmidius, Castellio and Trollius Bibles all followed Luther's rejection of the deuterocanonical books, and the labelling of those texts as 'apocrypha'.[129] In his *Explicatio*, Swedenborg produced an

[126] On Isaiah and Jeremiah, see Ryder, II, p. 110.
[127] Acton, *Introduction to the Word explained*, p. 14.
[128] E.E. Iungerich, *The Schmidius Marginalia together with the expository material of the index biblicus by Emanuel Swedenborg* (Bryn Athyn, 1917), p. 6.
[129] A. Hessayon, 'The Apocrypha in Early Modern England' in K. Killeen (ed. et als) *The Oxford Handbook of the Bible in Early Modern England, c. 1530-1700* (Oxford, 2015).

exegesis of the historical books of the Old Testament, including the five books from the Pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy), and the main other historical books (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles). This was completed by an exegesis of the two first prophetic books Isaiah and Jeremiah, which made up the fourth folio volume of the manuscript. Swedenborg later regarded the three last prophetic books (Lamentations, Ezekiel and Daniel) along with the minor prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi) as possessing an 'internal spiritual sense', and those sixteen books were for him to be considered as truly 'part of the Word'.[130] Although he did not produce an exegesis of them in his *Explicatio*, he had nonetheless made copious annotations in his Schmidius Bible of the three last prophetic books (Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel) and of the three first minor prophets (Hosea, Joel and Amos) along with minor comments from Obadiah to Malachi.[131]

In his *Arcana Coelestia*, where he produced a line-by-line exegesis of the books of Genesis and Exodus, Swedenborg denied an 'internal sense' to the two last historical books (Nehemiah, Esther) along with all of the poetical books, Psalms excepted (Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs). This contrasted with earlier positive comments he had made about Proverbs ('There is more wisdom in the Proverbs of Solomon than in any other book') although he did not regard them as devoid of spiritual value.[132] Finally, we can note Swedenborg's extensive interest in the book of Revelation, which allowed him to expose his idiosyncratic doctrines about the last judgment.[133] Although the apocalypse was commonly listed as part of Luther's 'antilegomena', meaning its canonical validity was frequently disputed or even denied by Lutherans (as

[130] AC, §10325.
[131] Iungerich, *Schmidius*, p. 3.
[132] For reference on Proverbs, see Acton, *Psychological Transactions*, pp. 248-9 and p. 260.
[133] For those views, see UJ (London, 1758) and UJ(C) (Amsterdam, 1763).

was the case in the Swedish Gustav II Adolf's Bible of 1618), Swedenborg nonetheless devoted three treatises to the interpretation of Revelation, making it the biblical text he commented the most during his life.[134]

While establishing his canon and outlining his new doctrinal theology, Swedenborg became preoccupied by possible inconsistencies published earlier in *De Cultu et Amore Dei*, noting that 'For what does not straightaway coincide with what has been revealed must be openly declared as wholly false or as an aberration of our rational mind.'[135] Still, Swedenborg was relieved at how much of *De Cultu* and his later exegesis of Genesis matched, noting 'Now when I had compared these things together with unremitting care I was amazed at their agreement'.[136] Although Swedenborg was satisfied, his later religious followers would reject the validity of *De Cultu* as a canonical work, especially its ovum metaphysics, its views about the devil and the arboreal origin of Adam.[137]

b) Servant of God Messiah: return to Sweden, supra-celestial soul, Hebrew studies and Jewish merchants (1745-1747)

On 19 August 1745, Swedenborg returned to Sweden.[138] During that time he stayed at his Räntmästarehuset residence in the central neighbourhood of Gamla Stan, Stockholm, close to House of Nobles and the Bureau of Mines, in a first-floor apartment, exposed to the south and close to the historic tavern *Gyldene Freden* ('the Golden Peace') where he often went.[139]

By the end of the year 1745, Swedenborg still regarded his views on the soul as the main draw to both his anatomical and recent poetic work. In September 1745, he received promising news from Niclas Oelreich in London: the councillor of the Chancery Salomon

[134] EA (1758), AE (unpublished, 1759), and AR (Amsterdam, 1766).
[135] *De Cultu*, p. 285.
[136] *De Cultu*, p. 285.
[137] See Frank Sewall in *De Cultu*, pp. 284-5 and 288.
[138] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 500.
[139] O. Hjern, 'Swedenborg in Stockholm', *The New Philosophy*, 115(1-2), Jan.–June (2012), p. 4.

von Otter (1693-14 October 1745) had read and found pleasure in *De Cultu et Amore Dei*. One of the five state councillors along with O. Estenberg, L. Klinckowström, A. Skutenhjehn and the Count C.G. Tessin, von Otter had married Johanna Tham (1712-1747), daughter of Sebastian Vollrathsson Tham (1666-1729), a wealthy and good friend of Swedenborg's late father Jesper Swedberg.[140] In 1729, Jonas Unge had unsuccessfully recommended to his brother-in-law Swedenborg that the latter should settle down and marry Johanna Tham's younger sister, Elizabeth, who was reportedly 'the best party in the country' for him.[141] On 16 September 1745, Swedenborg personally wrote to von Otter, arguing that since the latter 'possessed understanding' and took 'pleasure in the enjoyment of such subjects' he would find attached a set of *Regnum Animale*, a work which would allow him to continue to explore the topics of *De Mente Intellectuali* and *Anima*.[142] This further demonstrates that Swedenborg saw the two works as complementary, while the reference to *De Mente Intellectuali* points to another soul-body innovation brought by *De Cultu*: until the end of his life, Swedenborg would from now on distinguish between the *mens*, the *animus* and the soul, with the latter being called a 'supra-celestial' and 'entirely spiritual' faculty.[143] Unfortunately, Sebastian von Otter died a month after Swedenborg wrote to him, so the councillor's interest in the latter's soul-body work bore little fruit.[144]

Upon his return to Sweden, Swedenborg found himself in the position of having become the senior assessor at the Bureau of Mines of Sweden following the appointment of his brother-in-law Lars Benzelstierna as councillor in the bureau. This meant that he was now first-in-line to become a councillor in the bureau should a position become vacant, a

[140] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 433. For reference to the five councillors and Oelreich, see Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 500.
[141] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 433.
[142] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 501.
[143] H. L. J. Odhner, *The Human Mind, its Faculties and Degrees. A Study of Swedenborg's Psychology* (Bryn Athyn, 1969) p. 119.
[144] *SBL*, 'Sebastian von Otter'.

situation which caused him more distress than joy.[145] Swedenborg resumed his activities at the Board of Mines. He sat and voted regularly on various matters in the Board, such as the dispute between Forge Master Hans Hane and Mine Owner Johan Wester from the Falun Copper Mine.[146]

Through the years 1746 and 1747, Swedenborg continued to sit very regularly at the Bureau of Mines while working privately on his Biblical *Explicatio*. This marked a unique period in his career, when he was working jointly as a *Bergscollegium* assessor, serving as an active parliamentarian, yet also dabbling extensively in exegesis in his spare time. While doing this, Swedenborg started composing his index of the Hebrew Bible and continued to insert the insights of various spiritual experiences in his new manuscript, which he claimed, had been 'revealed' to him for 'about a year' since 1745.[147] Nevertheless, Swedenborg felt that God was still forbidding him from openly expressing such revelations, despite that the fact that spiritual truths were sometimes disclosed to him in public.[148] In his records, Swedenborg contended that his interlocutors mistook him from being buried in his thoughts, while he would be hearing the voices of various spirits, and even conversing with them, in mind or in words.[149] This was meant to illustrate the miraculous grace which Swedenborg had received: only he could be privy to hear such voices, because he had been chosen to have his spiritual senses opened:

> The actual speech is not heard by anyone save myself and those in the heavens who are present and to whom God Messiah grants permission to hear it. Yet sometimes the speech is as clear* and distinct as the human voice--though not so high or with so rough a sound as when coming through one's lips.* So much is this the case that sometimes even angels and spirits, etc., were afraid they would be heard by those who were present in the world.

[145] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 501.
[146] For references to Swedenborg's sitting in arbitration cases at that time, see *Academy Documents* vol. 6, pp. 722:12 (p. 104), and then again in June 1746, pp. 727:23 (p. 1-2). For references to Swedenborg's register of presence at the *Bergscollegium*, see p. 727:27 (p. 18) for the period January-May 1746), p. 721 for June 1746.
[147] AD, §3347 and §3323.
[148] See reference from June 1746 on spiritual experiences taking place in London, in the street, at home, and in Stockholm in church: *Academy Documents* vol. 6, pp. 727:25 (p. 131).
[149] AD, §3347.

Such claims, meant to be published later on, demonstrate that Swedenborg had already crafted his stance as a divinely chosen prophet in constant communication with spirits by the end of the year 1745. Similar statements show that Swedenborg sometimes felt directly guided by angels for extended periods of time: allegedly much like Moses had 'written the Ten Commandments', Swedenborg's 'hands, fingers, eyes, feet, and my entire body' were 'ruled by angels', sometimes even guiding him home through streets he did not know.[150] By then, Swedenborg claimed he had experienced out-of-body experiences so often that he 'could not number the times'.[151] Those many extraordinary statements often followed Swedenborg's interpretation of the Biblical text, usually serving as a practical demonstration to convince the reader while asserting his stance as a divinely chosen prophet.

On April 1746, a neutral mention of Swedenborg's *Regnum Animale* I-III appeared in the French *Journal des Scavants*, the leading French scholarly periodical. The three tomes of Swedenborg's *Regnum Animale* were now sold by French publisher William Cavelier, who had printed a French translation of Newton's *Defence of the Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms* (1725).[152] However, Swedenborg did not seem interested in the latest reception of his *Regnum Animale*. Instead, evidence in his manuscript suggests that it was during this period that he decided to freshen up his skills in Hebrew.[153] Like many of his contemporaries, such an interest was mainly philological and motivated by reading the Old Testament in its original language, along with classifying texts from the Canon according to their spiritual value.

[150]AD, §5741. See also §943.
[151] AD, §6671.
[152] Acton, *Scientific reviewers* (1933), p. 179. *Newton Project*, 'William Cavelier'.
[153] *Academy Documents*, vol. 6, p. 717:15 (p. 90). See transcripts of Swedenborg's Hebrew conjugations in *Spiritual diary* I, (London, 1977), p. 420, after §192.

Swedenborg's rekindled interest in Hebrew also took place in the context of a Swedish government project which resonated with his new religious ambitions. Indeed, in the months preceding Swedenborg's refreshing of his Hebrew skills, the Swedish government had pursued unconclusive negotiations to attract wealthy Jewish merchants from London to settle to Gothenburg, at a time where Swedenborg was still involved in a number of arbitrations relating to Swedish trade.[154] In order to do so, the government, led by an ill Carl Gyllenborg, had offered authorization for wealthy Jews to worship, build a synagogue in Gothenburg and obtain citizen rights, in return for investment and association into the trading efforts of the Swedish East and West Indian Companies.[155] The negotiations had first started in the spring of 1745, with the principles of such privileges being approved by the *Riksdag* on 27 June 1745.[156]

Swedenborg, who was still in London at that time, seemed energised by the prospect of wealthy Jews working hand-in-hand to further the global ambitions of Sweden: his manuscript *De Messiah in Mundo venturum* written during the period (from mid-April to mid-July 1745) expressed grand hopes about the role of inspired Jews in the establishment of the millenarian kingdom of God soon to come, and of his personal role in such an enterprise.[157] The new Kingdom of God, he wrote, would be established by 'Jews inspired by the spirit of God' and the 'Gentiles from all over the globe' in the Holy Land of 'Palestine' at the end of days. Pointing that 'the time is now at hand and the Kingdom of God is to come shortly', this would be done through the intercession of a 'servant' of the God Messiah.[158] As we will see in the next chapter, Swedenborg would

[154] For reference to Swedenborg's continuous involvement in trade while in Sweden in 1746, see *Academy documents* vol. 6, p. 729:14 (p. 2).
[155] Richard D. Barnett, 'The Correspondence of the Mahamad of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation of London during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England*, 20 (1959-61), pp. 22-3.
[156] Barnett, *Mahamad*, pp. 22-3.
[157] On the exact date of writing of *De Messiah*, see Ryder, II, p. 80. On Swedenborg as servant, see Acton, *Messiah*, iv and p. 1.
[158] For the coming is near, see Acton, *Messiah*, p. 98. On the servant, iv and p. 1.

later place the date of the last judgment during the year 1757, although any geographically specific reference to 'Palestine' would be dropped at the expanse of an entirely 'spiritual' New Jerusalem.[159] In January 1746, the offer of privileges to Jewish merchants was confirmed by letter patent from the office of Frederick I. Nevertheless, it seems that derogatory terms used in the letters by the Swedish government, coupled to the diplomatic and trading rivalries on the British side led to the project to be scrapped. The representative of the Jewish Mahamad of London answered that very few would come to Sweden and leave the protection of king George.[160] The project formally collapsed around October 1746, while Swedenborg's own records during the period seem to allude to the negotiations over several months.[161]

On 9 December 1746, Swedenborg's long-time protector Carl Gyllenborg finally died at 67, and was replaced by Carl Gustav Tessin as Privy Council Chancellor. Despite the loss of his powerful ally, Swedenborg retained support in government, and Tessin would later also grow fascinated by Swedenborg's 'visions' and would visit him personally to his house.[162] Meanwhile, in the spring of 1747, Swedenborg continued to work on his private studies while dealing with various matters of arbitration and trade, providing further evidence of his mental agency and continuous involvement in technical affairs for the *Bergscollegium*.

2) Swedenborg's retirement from the Bureau of Mines (1747) and new leave for Holland

The circumstances surrounding Swedenborg's retirement are significant, for they mark the clearest divide between his career as a private, amateur theologian, and the last

[159] See UJ.
[160] Barnett, *Mahamad*, p. 23.
[161] On the collapse of the project, see *SBL*, 'Abraham Arfwedson'. On Swedenborg's writings alluding to the negotiations, see e.g. AD, §3274, §4387, §5292, §5876, §6005, §6348, §7968.
[162] For visit in 1760, see Hjern, *Swedenborg in Stockholm* (2012), p. 230.

twenty-five years of his life as a full-time religious reformer. Nevertheless, the circumstances of his retirement have frequently been overlooked or even misinterpreted by former scholars. For instance, it has been commonly advanced that when being faced with the prospect of further promotion, Swedenborg had supposedly shunned all honours apart from his half salary due to his new ethos as a humble Revelator, and chose to retire to pursue his mission. However, this argument is not entirely satisfying, and tensions in the bureau regarding his seniority and part-time status rather seem to have been a decisive factor.

On 29 May 1747, one of the two offices of councillor became vacant following the retirement on 7 April of Johan Bergenstierna (1668-1748) at the age of 78.[163] The names of the three most senior assessors were shortlisted: Emanuel Swedenborg (who then was 59 years old, and had been an assessor for 31 years), Olof Collin (36 years of civil service, 17 years as assessor) and Nils Porath (35 years, 11 years as assessor).[164] Swedenborg was certainly not interested in taking up additional responsibilities: his lengthy manuscripts at the time show that his research in theology must have already been taking most of his spare time. Moreover, his extensive stays abroad, unusual amongst other assessors, were regarded by many as a reflection of an alleged unwillingness to serve in the bureau or stay in Sweden. Furthermore, the support which had allowed him to get away with such arrangements and work part-time for the last 20 years had waned with Gyllenborg's death in March 1746, while his private records reveal how strained his relationship was with his superior and brother-in-law Lars Benzelstierna.[165]

[163] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 501 erroneously claimed that J. Bergenstierna died on 07 April 1747; he actually died a year later on 01 March 1748.
[164] *Academy documents*, vol. 6, p. 731:11 (p. 1-3). See also Acton, *Letters*, I, pp. 501-3.
[165] see ES, §4851, ES, §6110.5.

Although he was the civil servant with the fewest years of service compared to Collin and Porath, Swedenborg was nonetheless the assessor with the longest tenure at the Bureau of Mines, having served there for a cumulative 31 years (first as extraordinary from December 1716 to July 1724, then as ordinary ever since). Swedenborg could not have refused the promotion warranted by his seniority and continue working as a part-time assessor: he was either to be promoted, or to retire early, with early retirement allowing for a dignified exit.

Swedenborg applied to the king for retirement on 2 June 1747, that is four days after having been shortlisted for the position.[166] In his letter, he mentioned how his honour of having been considered for the position clashed with his desire to 'pursue another work' and that he wished to retain his current salary in retirement (as per custom) and not to be promoted honorarily to the rank of councillor, with the usual raise that came with it.[167] This indicates that Swedenborg had rejected the councillorship in the first place, and was therefore not to accept an honorary one. He pleaded his usual tactic of alluding to a greater work to be published abroad which would be 'of use to the general public' in order to obtain the leave of absence which he desired.[168] On 15 June 1747, Swedenborg presented his letter of resignation approved by the king to the members of the Board of Mines present: the president Gustaf Rålamb, Lars Benzelstierna, his fellow assessors Olof Colling, Nils Porath, Hans Bierchenius, Daniel Tilas and Georg Brandt, while assessor Bonde was attending the *Riksdag*.[169]

Swedenborg agreed to continue sitting until all the cases commenced before his retirement were adjudicated. On 29 June 1747, Eric Benzelius's brother and successor as archbishop of Uppsala Jacob Benzelius (1683-1747) died and was succeeded by his son

[166] *Academy documents*, vol. 6, p. 732.
[167] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 502.
[168] See Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 503.
[169] *Academy documents*, vol. 6, p. 735.

Henric Benzelius (1689-1758), an ally of Swedenborg and a Pietist Hat who had followed Charles XII in exile and recently published his own work of scripture exegesis, *Syntagma dissertationum* (1745).[170] Such exegetical interests it seems, were not unusual in Swedenborg's close milieu at the time.

His retirement moreover coincided with a new alliance of Sweden with France which led to further parliamentary subsidies being sent to Hat members. It is probable that the prospect of soon receiving financial support from France also made Swedenborg comfortable in retiring with only his half-salary of assessor. In 1743, Swedenborg had acquired (but not yet fully moved) into a large house in Hornsgatan with a garden, which would from now on remain his main Stockholm residence until the end of his life and where he would receive many visitors, from politicians to followers, allies and curious people inquiring about his writings and gifts.[171] Swedenborg continued to work at the bureau for a month, before a last visit on 17 July 1747, after which he left for Holland on 24 July 1747.[172]

[170] *SBL*, 'Henric Benzelius'.
[171] Hjern, *Swedenborg in Stockholm* (2012), pp. 223-4.
[172] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 503.

Chapter V

The grand body of God, heresy trial, and the post-Christian Age (1748-1772)

Introduction

The fifth chapter explores the final developments of soul-body interaction in Swedenborg's theological works. From his magnum opus *Arcana Coelestia* to his very last manuscripts, the chapter demonstrates how Swedenborg's ideas on soul-body framed his doctrine of the *Homo Maximus*, the idea that the macrocosmic organization of angels, spirits, and demonic societies mirrors the physiology of the human body. The chapter shows how Swedenborg refined this model through various works across twenty years, and how his prophetic claims and global missionary ambitions earned him controversial fame as a theologian, which culminated in Sweden's last major heresy trial during a time of political and economic crisis. Still, during that period, Swedenborg remained a sought-after clairvoyant advisor and enjoyed considerable celebrity, despite struggling to secure a large religious following. The chapter shows how his continuous interest in soul-body led him to discuss an impressively wide range of topics, from philosophy to anatomy, illnesses and pains, sacred philology, marriage, sexuality, heredity, divine incarnation and Trinitarianism. Overall, the polymorphic character of Swedenborg's soul-body research shows the range of applications of the debate through the eighteenth century, from politics to anatomy, epistemology, linguistics, theology, and the existence of God himself. It was not only one of most contentious topics of the Enlightenment period: it was Swedenborg's lifelong quest.

I. *Homo Maximus*: soul-body interaction in Swedenborg's *Arcana Coelestia* (1749-1756)

a) Prophetic style: how to 'tell the exact truth', and the difference between visions and memorabilia

Freshly retired, Swedenborg left for Holland on 24 July 1747, where he remained until the fall of 1748.[1] Although Swedenborg was now focusing on a new work, he was committed to amplify the posterity of his anatomical research on the soul, and reissued some printed stock of his *Oeconomia Regni Animalis* with a fresh title page to give it the appearance of a third edition by the minor Amsterdam publisher Petrum Henricum Charlois in 1748.[2] While his former soul-body work was being 'reprinted', Swedenborg refined the content of his stories of divine inspiration and conversations with spiritual entities. The new way in which he framed such stories would become crucial to the later developments of his soul-body views. For instance, it is around that time that he restricted the scope of his conversations to spirits of deceased individuals.[3] Such a move enhanced the spectacular dimension of his claims, while conferring relative protection to Swedenborg's criticisms about the individuals he attacked, since, as classically highlighted by Diogenes Laërtius (whom Swedenborg had reviewed in his philosophical notebook), the dead cannot reply when they are attacked.[4] Swedenborg was not the first to experiment with various literary formats showcasing conversations with deceased figures: the theme of the dead speaking beyond the grave was a popular neo-Latin literary

[1] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 503.
[2] Ryder, I, p. 430.
[3] For references to both deceased and alive individuals in Swedenborg's former manuscript, see Bergquist, *Diary*. Deceased: King Charles XII, Swedenborg's father Jesper Swedberg (§59) his brother Eliezer (1692-1717, §188, §196), his sister Hedvig (1690-1728, §119, §262), and cousin Anton Swab (died 1731, §82, §186). Alive: Adolph Frederick, Frederick I, the Broman brothers, Arckenholdtz, Niclas Oelreich etc., and relatives such as his aunt Brita Behm.
[4] '*De mortuis nil nisi bonum'* in D. Laërtius, 'Chilon of Sparta', *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, I, §70 (Cambridge Ma, 1925). For Swedenborg's references to Diogenes and the soul, see *Notebook*, p. 527.

trope in Sweden, and the theme more broadly echoed the popular dialogues of the dead genre.[5]

Moreover, in the fall of 1747, Swedenborg had started a new journal (from 09 October 1747 until 24 October 1748) recording such conversations, retrospectively titled *experientiae spirituales*.[6] A note from 23 August 1748 indicates it was only towards the end of this journal that he decided to retrospectively reclassify all of his earlier memorabilia as 'spiritual experiences'.[7] Although he was now certain of their spiritual value and inspired character, Swedenborg still thought of them as literary constructions, noting they could only become 'absolutely right' after a careful editing process:

> … I cannot yet be sure of enough of it to swear to it by God, since I cannot be sure that the particular words are appropriate and precise enough to be absolutely right. So they need revision at some other time, God willing, so that I can seem to myself to be telling the exact truth.[8]

Finally, scholars have also noted how Swedenborg's writing during the period changed towards a drier neo-Latin prose style, centered on *quod*-clauses and factual assertions.[9] This new 'prophetic style', scholastic in appearance, saw him get rid of most ornamental features such as extensive use of synonyms and *variatio sermonis*, although he would keep a rich, poetically-charged iconography in many of his memorabilia.[10]

Swedenborg continued to produce records of 'spiritual experiences' until 1766, and claimed to have daily intercourse with spirits until the end of his life, even though no new experiences were recorded in his journals in his last years, from 1767 to 1772.[11] Those

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[5] On the literary theme of the dead speaking beyond the grave, see Helander, *Neo-Latin*, pp. 519-21; on dialogues of the dead, see Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, pp. 487-8. For Swedenborg's last reference to alive individuals in his spiritual diary, see ES, §6027:3.
[6] Ryder, I, pp. 120-1.
[7] *Sicut omnia quae in tribus his libris, et alioquin, scripta sunt… usque experientiae sunt* – 'so everything written in these three books [AD] and elsewhere… are nevertheless experiences' in Ryder, I, p. 120.
[8] AD, §475.
[9] Helander, *Festivus Applausus*, p.30. See also Erikson, *Observations*, pp.379-85; Helander, *Camena Borea*, p. 28.
[10] See VR, §462.
[11] See Ryder, II, p. 120 and p. 125 for the date of the last entry in the journal. Swedenborg also claimed he lost his gift during the three weeks, following his stroke after Christmas 1771.

records have often been loosely categorised as 'visions' by scholars, as did most of Swedenborg's readers during the second half of the eighteenth century. However, Swedenborg contended that his memorabilia of *experientiae spirituales* were not 'visions' (*visiones*) experienced in altered states of consciousness, but things 'seen in plain sight and highest wakefulness'. Those memorabilia were supposed to be distinct from 'visions' to which he associated an 'extraordinary' character, and which he also claimed to have experienced, albeit on a less frequent basis. This distinction was first outlined in the closing statements of his *Arcana Coelestia* (I, 1749):

> … These two kinds of visions, however, are extraordinary, and were shown me merely to the end that I might know their nature. But the things I have habitually 'seen' as mentioned in the title to this work are all those which of the Lord's Divine mercy you may see related in this First Part, and which are placed at the beginning and end of the several chapters. These are not visions, but things seen in the highest wakefulness of the body, and this for several years.[12]

I argue that such a distinction, vastly ignored by Swedenborg's readers and scholars alike, was supposed to perform a double function. First, it was meant to impress his readers, by showing that he was privy to various manifestations of divine power, including from the highest kind. Second, such a distinction was meant to preserve his memorabilia from the possible stigma of accusations of visionary enthusiasm, at a time where 'visions' were commonly associated with madness and delusions of the imagination. Nevertheless, Swedenborg would not escape such accusations, and his divided readership would rarely subscribe to his fine-grained distinctions.[13]

Towards the end of his stay in Holland in 1748, Swedenborg became excited at the prospect of combining the 149 *experientiae spirituales* from his new journal with a more structured line-by-line exegesis of the foundational books of Genesis and Exodus, to be published with the help of his new Moravian networks in London. As we will see, the

[12] AC, §1885. For a reaffirmation of this, see UJ(C), §35: '*Asseverare possum quod illa non sint visiones, sed quod sint Visa in omni vigilia*'.
[13] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 492.

new work would also be inspired by his former anatomical research, and in it he reframed his soul-body corpus into a new metaphysical model called *Homo Maximus*, the grand body of God.

b) Moravian networks, French pension, and global missionary ambitions

It is with this new project in mind that in October 1748, Swedenborg sailed from Holland to England. Arriving there at the end of October, he stayed for six months in London to write and publish what became the first volume of his *Arcana Coelestia* ('Secrets of Heaven' in eight volumes, 1749-1756).[14] Despite falling out with part of the Moravian community at Fetter Lane, Swedenborg had kept contacts in the London congregation and intended to rely on the Moravian community to spread his new religious ideas. For releasing his first book as an inspired exegete, Swedenborg chose the Moravian publisher John Lewis, who had a shop in Paternoster Row, close to St Paul's Cathedral.[15] The work was printed by a collaborator of Lewis, John Hart, in Poppins Court, Fleet Street, London, and was also sold in the Strand at the shop of John Nourse, the former publisher of *Regnum Animale III* and *De Cultu et Amore Dei*.[16] The anonymous, eight-volume work was Swedenborg's first theological publication, and also the first to disclose his alleged records of conversations with Jesus Christ, spirits from Earth, from other planets, and angels, in a first print of 500 copies.[17]

New providential financial support proved instrumental in the continuous development of Swedenborg's theology. The publishing costs of the eight volumes of *Arcana Coelestia* were considerable, and amounted to £1,600 (circa 25,000 French livres).[18] Swedenborg's private banking accounts indicate that those costs were mostly covered by a six-year

[14] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 505.
[15] Davies, *Swedishman*, p. 392 and Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 353.
[16] Ryder, II, p. 186.
[17] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 353.
[18] My personal calculation, based on the conversion rates given by Lindh and Bergquist.

advance of 15,000 French livres from an annual diplomatic pension transferred on his Dutch and English accounts.[19] This annual pension of 2,500 French livres was part of a new series of French subsidies transferred to Swedish parliamentarians by agents of Louis XV's *Secret du Roy*, to ensure Swedish political alignment in the context of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, which settled the Austrian War of Succession on 18 October 1748.[20] A famous annotation from Swedenborg's hand shows how he asked to hide the transfer from his Swedish banker Peter Hultman 'so no one may know how much I am worth', and he recorded no activity on his Swedish account from his retirement on 15 June 1747 until 9 March 1748.[21] This prepayment covered the costs of the two first volumes of *Arcana Coelestia*, plus the translation and printing of the second volume in English, following advice from his editor John Lewis after the first volume's disappointing sales.[22] Swedenborg's French pension likely continued until the end of his life, as the total printing costs of his theological works from 1745 to 1772 exceeded the declared income from his mining estates, inheritances, transactions and *Bergscollegium* pension.[23] This also led him to rely less and less on his Swedish account and to withdraw money exclusively from his English and Dutch accounts to pay for the printing of his works.[24]

This French pension allowed Swedenborg to instruct that all prospects of *Arcana Coelestia* be donated to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, a London-based transnational missionary organization tied to his late father Jesper, which Swedenborg supported since his first travel to England in 1710.[25] The Society featured many

[19] Bergquist, *Secret*, pp. 353-4.
[20] Bergquist, *Secret*, pp. 353-4.
[21] Lindh, *Ekonomi* (Sept. Oct. 1929), p. 85. For the annotation, see Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 505, and Bergquist, *Secret*, pp. 355-6.
[22] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 357 and Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 509–11.
[23] For a review of this, see Bergquist, *Secret*, pp. 353-66.
[24] [24] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 358.
[25] On Jesper Swedberg and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, see *SBL*, 'Jesper Swedberg'. On Swedenborg giving all proceedings to the Society, see Ryder, II, p. 186.

Moravian evangelisers rumoured to convert 'thousands of slaves and native Americans every week'.[26] Such global evangelizing ambitions tied well with Swedenborg's hopes to spread his universalist theology to all over the globe.[27] It also tied into his growing condemnation of slavery, which he had started denouncing as early as 1741 in his *Oeconomia Regni Animalis*.[28] Although Swedenborg never actively advocated for abolitionism, his critical stance was in line with many Lutheran positions on slavery during the eighteenth century, which did not advocate abolition nor emancipation of enslaved people, yet displayed concern for their conversion and spiritual welfare.[29] Swedenborg's interest in gentile conversion culminated in his later view that spirits of Sub-Saharan Africans were spiritually superior to all people because of their receptivity to new religious ideas. This made him one of the early and only Swedish critics of slavery in the 1740s, at a time where Swedish efforts to develop their East and West Indian companies indirectly involved the country in the slave trade, with the slave-exploiting Dutch, British and French Indian companies managing the assets of many members of the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences.

c) *Homo Maximus* in context: universal church, other planets, and micro-macrocosm in early modern Sweden

As we have seen, from 1745 onwards, Swedenborg saw himself as sent by the 'God Messiah' on a divinely-commissioned 'mission' of missionary conversion.[30] Such a call resonated with the ambitions of Moravian evangelisers, but also with the emphasis commonly placed by Pietists on universal priesthood, which often challenged the Lutheran clerical monopoly of preaching, by opening new possibilities for religious

[26] Stange, *Lutheran Church and Slavery*, p. 278.
[27] See for instance AD, §4937.
[28] *OERA*, II, §323.
[29] Stange, *Lutheran Church and Slavery*, p. 280.
[30] AD, §3345.

speech.[31] As a newly-declared prophet, independent theologian and inspired exegete, Swedenborg used soul-body interaction to describe his religious ambitions of evangelization, conversion, and religious unification. This resulted in his new doctrine of the grand body of God or *Homo Maximus*, through which he detailed how human physiology mirrored the macrocosmic organization of angelic, spirit, and demonic societies in heaven, hell, and the intermediary world of spirits.[32] Such a doctrine represented Swedenborg's most ambitious attempt to reframe his former soul-body work into a new religious cosmology.

As we have seen, the idea of the grand body of God was based on a literal take of the topical biblical trope of the body of Christ as one Church, meant to illustrate how Swedenborg's take on Christianity would lay the foundations for a new universal ecclesia, functioning as one grand spiritual body. Such uses expanded the political overtones of the simile previously explored in his anatomical works, which he had further outlined in his *Explicatio* manuscript.[33] Many entries in Swedenborg's new spiritual diary similarly referred to the grand body of God, a form reflected in the human body he had assumed when incarnating himself as Christ:

> …Universal heaven relates to the Body of our Saviour, who governs the universe as if it were His body. […] In His body are two kingdoms, so to speak, just as in the human body; one pertains to the heart and the other to the lungs. The one pertaining to the heart is called heavenly, and the one pertaining to the lungs is called spiritual. [34]

However, in contrast to long-standing narratives, the peculiarities of the *Homo Maximus* did not lie in its micro-macro stance, as such a theme was still commonplace at the time.[35] Similarly, the concept of 'correspondences' (*correspondentia*) commonly hailed

[31] J. Strom, 'Pietism and Revival' in J. van Eijnatten (ed.), *Preaching, Sermon and Cultural Change in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Leiden, 2009), p. 186.
[32] For a summary of the doctrine of the *Homo Maximus*, see Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 477.
[33] AD, §187.*'*
[34] AD, §499. See also §486, §488, §493, and §499.
[35] Lamm, *Development*, p. 256.

as his most famous and original doctrine, can actually be traced back to the Dominican scholastics Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas's *De Veritate* (1256).[36] Later present in Agrippa, Bacon and Kircher, the scholastic neologism even became, following Spinoza, a standard term to express how spirit and matter related to each other within the wider frame of neo-Cartesian discourses.[37] Various scholars well reviewed by Swedenborg in his philosophical notebook such as Malebranche, Locke, and Leibniz also used the term.[38] Links between the human body and the wider cosmos had more broadly been a trope since the Renaissance.[39] Similarly, anatomical conceptions of the human body as a celestial epitome to explore had moreover were particularly commonplace from the sixteenth century to the middle of the seventeenth century.[40] To account for the publication of Swedenborg's model almost a century later, modern scholars have often linked his *Homo Maximus* framework to a rationalist actualization of anthropomorphic cosmologies present in kabbalistic and Paracelsian literature.[41] However, such influences have also been dismissed as exaggerated or misleading.[42] My research agrees with the latter, and I argue such an error partly stems from overlooking the closer Swedish and Pietists contexts within which models like Swedenborg's retained legitimacy longer than on the continent.

In the seventeenth century, Swedenborg's rumoured ancestor, the great scholar and poet Georg Stiernhielm (1598-1672) had for instance reinterpreted in his poems *Astropoeticus* and *Monile Minervae* the ideas of Transylvanian-Saxon Calvinist minister Johann Heinrich Alsted (1588-1638) whom himself had written in his *Encyclopedia* about the

[36] Lawrence, *Correspondentia*, pp. 42-3.
[37] Lawrence, *Correspondentia*, p. 44. See also Helander, *Neo-Latin*, p. 436.
[38] Lawrence, *Correspondentia*, pp. 45-6.
[39] R. Mandressi, *Le regard de l'anatomiste: dissections et invention du corps en Occident* (Paris, 2003), pp. 155-6, Helander, *Neo-Latin*, pp. 434-44. See also J.P. Brach, and W. Hanegraaff, 'Correspondences', in W. Hanegraff (ed. et als), *Dictionary of Western Gnosis and Esotericism* (Leiden, 2006), pp. 276-8, and Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 477.
[40] Mandressi, *Dissecctions*, p. 165.
[41] See Lamm, *Development*, p. 256, Jonsson, *Korrespondenslära*, p. 272, and Brach, *Correspondences*, pp. 276-8.
[42] Jonsson, *Visionary Scientist*, p.189, Hanegraaff, *Secrets of Heaven*, xxi.

links between the planets and the different parts of the heavens and the human body.[43] During his own student years at Uppsala, Swedenborg was an avid reader and admirer of Stiernhielm, collected books which had belonged to him, and even believed he was one of his descendants.[44] Stiernhielm's ideas were commonplace in Swedish neo-Latin literature during the Swedish Empire (1620-1720), with similar conjectures found in the works of Swedes such as the statesman Johan Skytte (1577-1645) and the runologist Johannes Bureus (1568-1652).[45]

In 1711, two years after Swedenborg's graduation, the Swede Andreas Sam. Piil (?-1752) published his Uppsala dissertation *Disputatio Philosophica Parallelismum Microcosmi et Macrocosmi breviter delineans,* a treatise linking body parts to metals and planets redolent of alchemical, metallurgic and astronomical speculations from the preceding century. The sun was linked to the heart and to gold, the moon to the medulla cerebralis and silver, Mercury to the lungs, Venus to the kidneys and spermatic canals, Mars to the gallbladder and Jupiter with the liver.[46] In *Arcana Coelestia*, Swedenborg established similar parallels by showcasing twelve accounts of conversations with spirits from planets of the solar system and beyond, all associated with various body parts in his *Homo Maximus*.[47] Such accounts clearly tapped into his former anatomical research. For instance, Swedenborg described Jovian spirits as associated with the 'seminal canal', since they behaved 'like sperm' and were led by desire.[48] The spirits and angels perceived Mars 'in the plane of the breast' and to be associated with the ossified 'membrane of the skull', while Martian spirits themselves belonged to the 'longitudinal sinus' between the cerebrum and the cerebellum, which lies between its two

[43] Helander, *Neo-Latin*, p. 440.
[44] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 487.
[45] Helander, *Neo-Latin*, pp. 440-1
[46] Helander, *Neo-Latin*, p. 442
[47] See Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 473-6.
[48] TE, §78.

hemispheres.[49] Both Swedenborg and Piil had studied under the same university teachers, and both obviously drew from a common scholarly tradition, still alive within the *Bergscollegium* and the academic circles of Uppsala.[50]

d) The Pietist body: fluids and pains as spirits and signs

Overall, Swedenborg's model substituted older alchemical and astral influences with elaborate religious interpretations of physiological processes based on his former anatomical research, which were meant to edify and teach his readership about his theology. Apart from the Uppsala circles mentioned above, Swedenborg's *Homo Maximus* can be further contextualised within his Pietist background. Pietists commonly established links between the individual body and the broader community via a tendency to articulate somatic experiences in terms of social relations and experiences.[51] Scholars have noted in particular how the Pietistic sense of identity was closely related to the interconnectedness of soul and body and the wider environment.[52] This seems particularly relevant in Swedenborg's case, as his micro-macro model led him to claim that sensations or pains in his own body represented confirmations of his doctrines, with even the most trivial and detailed bodily functions interpreted as spiritual signs.[53]

For instance, Swedenborg, who suffered from kidney calculi, wrote in *Arcana Coelestia* that spirits from the province of the kidneys, ureters and bladder exist in interrelated series, just as the secretions from those organs are interrelated.[54] Speaking 'in a raucous voice as if cracked' (§5380), spirits associated with urine are evil, because such a fluid is nothing but 'an unclean and used-up serum separated from the blood' (§5397:1). Such

[49] TE, §86, §88, §95.
[50] Piil's thesis was defended under Harald Vallerius, prof. between 1690 to 1712, who acted as Swedenborg's mathematics and optics teacher.
[51] Van Gent, *Magic*, p. 199.
[52] Van Gent, *Magic*, p. 199.
[53] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 477. See also Jonsson, *Korrespondenslära*, p. 272. For examples of pains caused by spirits, see AC, §5388.
[54] AC, §5380. For reference to Swedenborg suffering from kidney calculi, see Robsahm, *Memoirs*, p. 8.

spirits, like an unnamed former ‘Assentor’ who ‘loved the smell of urine’ and caused Swedenborg ‘cramps’ in the lower part of his belly (§5388), were, he claimed, often ‘miserably’ tortured by another type of recurring spirits who ‘twist’ them and ‘return regularly’ echoing Swedenborg’s own calculi. Such tormenting spirits ‘correspond to the fundus or upper part of the bladder in general, and to the muscular ligaments converging therefrom toward the sphincter’, because, Swedenborg argued, such a region is ‘where a twisting action is employed to release urine’ (§5389). He similarly associated excrements of the intestines with infernal entities (§5380), while the spirits of former robbers and pirates, who he said appeared horribly devoid of facial traits, loved nothing more than to dwell in stagnant pools of fetid urine.[55]

Such parallels, which scholars such as Inge Jonsson described as ‘detailed to the absurd’, often conferred a striking dimension to Swedenborg’s statements. These stories partly relied on narrativising his former anatomical research, but also acted as edifying counterparts to his rather dry scripture exegeses, while ranging from the horrifying to the comical.[56] This informs us further about Swedenborg’s target audience: educated Latin readers with a taste for sensationalism, theology and anatomy. Overall, *Arcana Coelestia* featured more than 300 entries directly concerned with the grand body of God, with dedicated sections exploring the spiritual meanings related to the heart, lungs, cerebrum, cerebellum, senses, limbs, genitals, eyes, nostrils, nose, face, ears, taste and tongue, viscera, skin, hair, bones, and illnesses. Those aspects closely follow the themes of Swedenborg’s unpublished anatomical manuscripts, such as his extensive study of the five senses (*De Sensu Communi*, 1744). In *Arcana Coelestia*, the *Homo Maximus* became Swedenborg’s framework for a new cosmological theology, but also a way to read off truths about the cosmos from sensations in his own body. It provided him with a unified

[55] AC, §820, §954:1, §5387, §5388:1.
[56] Jonsson, *Korrespondenslära*, p. 272. For a discussion of irony and satire in Swedenborg’s memorabilia, see Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, pp. 483-4.

metaphysics and epistemology. Although *Arcana Coelestia* would form the most extensive exposition of Swedenborg's *Homo Maximus*, as we will see, his soul-body views still continued to evolve in the last twenty years of his life, and to align with a variety of uses related to the promotion of his doctrines.

e) The early reception of *Arcana Coelestia*: comparisons from Behmenism to Catholicism

In the summer or fall of 1749, the first volume of *Arcana Coelestia* was released, and Swedenborg went to spend the winter in Aix-la-Chapelle to write the next volume in the series.[57] One year earlier, Aix-La-Chapelle had been the theatre of negotiations for major diplomatic talks which eventually put an end to the War of Austrian Succession (1740-1748). Nevertheless, this peace planted the seeds for a major diplomatic realignment that led nine years later to the global conflict of the Seven Years War, a period which, as we will see, Swedenborg would associate with the end times. It is also in Aix-la-Chapelle that he learned via a letter from Lewis that only four copies of his *Arcana Coelestia* had been sold in the two months following its publication.[58] Disappointed, Swedenborg recorded in his *diarium spirituale* that 'the angels were indeed surprised' but remained confident that Providence would eventually 'spread the things written through me' towards those 'who have faith'.[59]

In the spring of 1750, Swedenborg's authorship of *Arcana Coelestia* remained a well-kept secret. Apart from Lewis and Hart, the only person who reportedly knew the identity of the author of *Arcana Coelestia* was the Swede Joachim Wretman, an Amsterdam-based merchant and bulb seeds dealer who regularly provisioned Swedenborg's garden in his Hornsgatan property in Södermalm, Stockholm.[60] Wretman was also tasked to serve

[57] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 465.
[58] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 510.
[59] ES, §4422.
[60] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 509.

as an intermediary in the correspondence between Lewis and Swedenborg, so no one might be able to trace back *Arcana Coelestia*'s authorship directly to the latter.[61]

Despite disappointing sales, the work had been noticed and first reviews started to emerge. Swedenborg's new publication was instantly compared to the works of Jacob Boehme (1575-1624) who in 1623 had written a famous mystical commentary of the book of Genesis, *Mysterium Magnum*. Such a comparison might at first seem surprising considering the significant differences in doctrine, style, time period and method between the two authors. As we have seen, although scholars have hailed both authors as foundational figures in the history of Illuminism, Boehme is commonly regarded as the founder of 'Christian theosophy' while recent scholarship has argued against classifying Swedenborg as such.[62] Nevertheless, in the eighteenth century, many readers like German theologian Friedrich Christoph Oetinger and French librarian Antoine Pernety were drawn to Swedenborg's theology because of their initial interest in Behmenist literature, and frequently merged various ideas from the two. On the opposite side of the spectrum, critical reviewers would typically dismiss Swedenborg's books as being similar to Boehme for their perceived enthusiasm.[63] Swedenborg himself eventually addressed the comparisons in 1766 and 1767, by affirming that he had never read the writings of the shoemaker from Bohemia, nor any of the works of his contemporary proponent, the English clergyman William Law (1686-1761).[64]

Such a clarification seemed long overdue, as alleged Behmenist overtones had been flagged as soon as the fall of 1749 by *Arcana Coelestia*'s first verified buyer, a man named Stephen Penny from Dartmouth, Devonshire. For Penny, such overtones were

[61] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 509.
[62] Bergé, *Illuminism*, p. 604. On the absence of Swedenborg's name when defining early modern theosophy, see Hanegraaff, *Böhme and Christian Theosophy*, p. 126.
[63] For reference to this review from 1770, see Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 491.
[64] Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 622-3. See also pp. 630-1.

actually a strong selling point. In October 1749, Penny asked John Lewis about the author's identity, wondering whether it might be William Law, who at the time, had just released the first volume of a Behmenist treatise on prayer and the Adamic fall, titled *The Spirit of prayer: or, the soul rising out of the vanity of time into the riches of eternity* (London,1749-1750). Law's work not only shared thematic similarities with Swedenborg's: his latest work was sold at Richardson's, a publisher located close to Lewis in Paternoster row.[65] Apart from those perceived similarities, Penny's accounts of *Arcana Coelestia* were so positive than John Lewis ended up using the former's letter for promotional purposes.[66] Penny confessed having had an 'extraordinary degree of pleasure in reading [*Arcana Coelestia* vol. I]' praising how the book highlighted the spiritual value of the Old Testament beyond the sole 'Jewish dispensation'. Penny nonetheless predicted that 'the illumined author' 'must expect a considerable army of gown-men to draw their pens against him', rightly anticipating some of the controversies that would accompany the break of Swedenborg's anonymity within the next ten years, and culminated with the heresy trial of 'Swedenborgianism' in 1769.

In May 1750, another reviewer, this time from the *Neue Zeitungen von Gelehrten Sachen* assumed on the contrary that, because of its 'anagogical' interpretations of Genesis, the anonymous author of *Arcana Coelestia* must have been a Catholic; a 'devout person of the popedom'. The work seemed redolent of the 'scholastic centuries' and of those times where 'the senses were tortured by such senseless thoughts, whereby the truths of Scripture were lost sight of'.[67] Scholars have identified in recent years how Swedenborg's ideas tied into Catholic views about the afterlife while simultaneously criticizing them.[68] It would not be the last time where Swedenborg would have to defend

[65] W. Law, *The Spirit of prayer: or, the soul rising out of the vanity of time into the riches of eternity* (London, 1749-1750).
[66] *Academy documents*, vol. 6, p. 747.
[67] *Academy documents*, vol. 6, p. 759:11 (p. 2-3).
[68] See C. Gutierrez, 'Spiritualism', in C. Partridge (ed.), *The Occult World* (New York, 2015), p. 199.

the apparent similarity between his doctrines and those of Roman Catholicism, and he would later claim that Catholics might stand a better chance to enter heaven than some of the Reformed.[69] More broadly, the range of criticisms and comparisons reflect the literary complexity of the work and its innovative blend of literary codes. It also set the *Homo Maximus* as the wider framework through which Swedenborg would use soul-body to teach and spread his religious doctrines.

II. The Nordic end times (1751-1757)

1) Millenarian anxieties and devilish men

a) Failed coup, famine, intoxications, and Sweden's entrance in the Seven Years War

Swedenborg returned to Stockholm via Amsterdam in the spring or summer of 1750. He remained in Stockholm for the next six years, from 1751 to 1757, attending the *Riksdag* on various occasions while sending his manuscripts to London, until the last tome of *Arcana Coelestia* was released in 1756. In his eyes, this coincided with a moment of tremendous spiritual importance: the beginning of the biblical apocalypse, which he claimed, started between 'the end of the year 1756' and 'the beginning of 1757'.[70] The end times, he wrote, took place 'over a year' and saw a vast reordering of the heavens, hells, and spiritual world, allegedly completed by the end of 1757.[71]

Speculations about the end times and the special spiritual significance of certain years were ubiquitous during the early modern period. In Sweden, those had been announced through various foretelling methods. In the preceding century, Swedish linguist and librarian Johannes Bureus (1568-1662) had used chronograms in an attempt to predict the date of the upcoming millennium: the word *IVDICIVM* ('judgement') was found to have

[69] On purgatory, see VR, §475. On Catholics and Heaven, SE, §96.
[70] ES, §5239, and UJ, §45.
[71] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 474.

a Roman numeral equivalence to the year in which Bureus' investigation was taking place (*IVDICIVM=MDCVVIII*=1613) and therefore, to be a special year where knowledge about the end times would be revealed. Later that year, Bureus concluded that the new millennium would take place in 1666, by conducting a chronogram analysis of the *sentence eCCe CrVCeM Cor et CLaVos IesV* ('See the cross, heart and nails of Jesus') which gave MCCCCCCLVVVI=1666.[72] Swedenborg paid great attention to the spiritual qualities of numbers, exemplified by his exegesis of the number 666.[73] Nevertheless, although he shared with Bureus an erudite fascination for primordial languages and some millenarian tendencies, as a trained mathematician he refrained from such analogical speculations.

Overall, Swedenborg's spiritual revolution during the year 1757 was supposed to usher in a new dispensation where the doctrines of the 'New Jerusalem' were to spread globally. His millenarian revolution echoed worrying and trying times in Sweden, featuring the aftermath of a failed military coup, fears of famine, endemic alcoholic intoxication, and rumours of a global war soon to come. Five years earlier, the old king Frederick I, who had died on 5 April 1751, was succeeded by the crown prince Adolph Frederick, with his Prussian wife Louisa Ulrika (sister of Frederick II of Prussia) becoming queen. Supported by the so-called *Hovpartiet* ('Royal Court Party'), Louisa Ulrika ambitioned to restore monarchical power over the *Riksdag*, a project which triggered the resignation of the Swedish prime minister Carl Gustaf Tessin, who like Swedenborg, opposed any extension of the royal prerogative. Tessin was succeeded by Anders Johan von Höpken (1712-1789), a Hat politician who would remain head of the Swedish government for the next ten years, and who later consulted Swedenborg almost daily during the *Riksdag* crisis that marked the end of his premiership.[74] Following Tessin's resignation, the queen

[72] Helander, *Neo-Latin*, pp. 462-3.
[73] See AR, §610:2.
[74] Davies, *Swedishman*, p. 386. See also *SBL*, 'Anders Johan von Höpken'.

gradually built and then led a botched military coup on 22 June 1756 to restore absolute monarchical power, which led to the execution of several Swedish *Hovpartiet* aristocrats and officers. It would later be rumoured in 1761 that Swedenborg had used his powers to access secret information about the coup.[75] Although he did not publicly comment on the events at the time, many publications at the time discussed the failed revolution, condemned royal absolutism, and defended the current system, such as *En swensks tankar öfwer den 22 Junii 1756* (*A Swedish reflection on the 22 June 1756*), a small treatise written by Swedish countess Elizabeth Stierncrona, Swedenborg's rumoured love interest.[76] Swedenborg had numerous financial and estates dealings with her husband Fredrik Gyllenborg (1698-1759), brother of the late chancellor, who was an ardent Hat, the party finance-handler, and president of the College of Mines from 1750 until his death.[77]

The failed coup happened more broadly during the so-called 'diplomatic revolution' which led to the global conflict of the Seven Years War (1756-1763).[78] Although von Höpken had struck an early neutrality deal with Denmark in 1756, the agreement only lasted a year before Sweden joined the league in 1757 against the queen's brother, Frederick II of Prussia. Swedenborg's followers would later comment that 'one who can believe [Swedenborg]' will read his millenarian claims 'with just the same curiosity as the most ardent lover of public newspapers during times of war'.[79] Sweden's geopolitical situation in that year was worsened domestically by a series of bad harvests which threatened the country's food security, and prompted renewed attempts from the *Riksdag* to stop illegal distillation amongst the peasants, fight endemic drunkenness, save grain,

[75] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 281.
[76] A. Fryxell, *Berättelser ur Svenska Historien*, vol. 43 (Stockholm, 1904), p. 201, and Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 463. On Stierncrona as a love interest, see Lindh, *Ekonomi* (1929), p. 42.
[77] *SBL*, 'Fredrik Gyllenborg'.
[78] K. Schweizer, 'The Duke of Newcastle and the Diplomatic Revolution, 1753–1757: A Historical Revision', *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 28(2) (2017) pp. 167-94.
[79] A. Acton, *Cuno's Memoirs* (Bryn Athyn, 1947), p. 26.

and avoid famine.[80] Swedenborg himself had unsuccessfully presented a memorandum to the *Riksdag* in 1755, campaigning for joint regulation of distillation and lowering of taxes in a context of rising inflation.[81] The parliament took a harder line, and from 1755 to 1759, a total prohibition on distillation was enforced in Sweden, albeit with mixed results.[82] Finally, Swedenborg's end times also coincided with the much-publicised last witch trial in Sweden, which featured torture and forced confessions in the Als parish in Dalarna.[83] Swedenborg took witchcraft seriously, associating *truldoms konster* ('the witchcraft arts') with the evil falsification of truth and sexual promiscuity, and he listed witchcraft as a legitimate cause for conjugal separation.[84] It is in this anxious geopolitical, domestic and spiritual context that he announced the advent of the apocalypse, predicting that free-willed human souls within the grand body of God would be given the choice to embrace the teachings of the global New Jerusalem.

b) Soul-body after death, Hell, and the Infernal Grand Man

Swedenborg's last developments on soul-body interaction accompanied his rising fame as a millenarian prophet and seer. Moreover, they also played an important part in his efforts to spread his doctrines more widely. In the spring or summer of 1758, Swedenborg left Stockholm for London, for what became his seventh foreign trip, and stayed in London until the end of the year. Following advice from John Lewis, he published a series of five shorter works with a stronger emphasis on his spectacular memorabilia, which were all released in 1758.[85] Those five works were each aimed at different audiences and provided shorter doctrinal excerpts for easier access at a time where Swedenborg's reach was starting to expand. The most extensive discussion of soul-body in those five London

[80] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 518.
[81] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 517. On inflation in 1755, see Ryder, III, p. 461.
[82] Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 519-20.
[83] H. A. Barton, 'Gustav III of Sweden and the Enlightenment', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 6(1) (1972), p. 16.
[84] ES, §269. On *Truldoms konster* see ES, §641:1. On witchcraft, whoredom and false truths, see AC, §6978; on enchantments and truth, see AR, §462, On witchcraft and separation, see AM, §252.
[85] TE, CI, UJ, NH, EA.

works is featured in his best-selling book to this day, *De Coelo et de Inferno* (*Heaven and Hell*) a detailed doctrinal exposition based on memorabilia of heavens and hells. In the years following its publication, *De Coelo* became one of Swedenborg's most famous works, and its short format coupled to a rigorous thematic ordering proved popular in breaking his doctrines to wider audiences.

More crucially for our argument, *De Coelo* saw Swedenborg double down on the prevalence of the soul and spirit over the perishable, material, and intrinsically lifeless human body.[86] This represented a radical extension of the neo-Platonic Augustinian-Porphyrian trope which regarded humans as souls clothed with a body.[87] Such statements were backed up by memorabilia where Swedenborg spoke of his own 'extraordinary' out-of-body experiences, allegedly providing direct testimony that the human form persists, even after the carnal body is left behind or perishes.[88] Liberated from its carnal envelope, the soul after death becomes, Swedenborg argued, an immortal spiritual body with similar bodily functions, needs and sensory perception as its former fleshy envelope, yet in a heightened and more perfect manner. The incarnated reality of the spiritual afterlife, he said, often confused spirits who denied the resurrection or believed that ghosts were mere disembodied entities.[89]

Furthermore, for the first time Swedenborg concisely exposed how the personal afterlife was primarily shaped by the human soul, via a change in cognition drawing on former terrestrial memories, represented through the faculty of imagination.[90] This doctrine of 'dynamic representations', based on his former anatomical research into sensory perception, not only echoed traditional Catholic and folk views about the shape-shifting

[86] CI, §432-433. Swedenborg would maintain this prevalence until the end of his life, see VR, §583.
[87] On this trope, see D. Sipe, 'Struggling with Flesh: Soul/Body Dualism in Porphyry and Augustine' *Concept*, 29 (2006), pp. 1-3, 5.
[88] CI, §433, 440, 441.
[89] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, pp. 478-9.
[90] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 478.

powers of spirits, but also more contemporary philosophies such as the idealism of George Berkeley, which he had critically reviewed in his notebook.[91] Similarly, Swedenborg's claims about the illusory nature of space, along with his distinction between time and duration in the spiritual world all featured Cartesian characteristics, yet also reminiscent aspects of the ancient philosophy of Parmenides of Elea, whom he quoted via Malebranche's *De Veritate* in his notebook.[92]

Overall, Swedenborg expanded the scope of his soul-body views by discussing how heaven and hell, rather than being places one goes to after death, act as personal 'interior spiritual states' determined by one's inclinations and deeds during life.[93] Such a position, shaped by his fierce opposition to *sola fide*, led him to affirm that 'the Lord sends no one into hell' as spirits eventually 'cast themselves' into infernal states of their own making.[94] By doing so, Swedenborg rejected what he called the 'traditional doctrine' of the devil, understood as one single demonic identity presiding over the hells, instead contending that all mentions of Satan or Lucifer in the Bible should be viewed as personified references to the hells in general.[95] Such a position was shaped by the widespread Protestant view that attributing power to the devil equalled denying the sovereignty of God.[96]

Nevertheless, by actively denying Satan altogether, Swedenborg's radical position moved radically from Lutheran orthodoxy and dangerously echoed Spinoza's atheist arguments against the devil's existence.[97] This would later prompt Swedenborg's readers to paradoxically accuse him of holding views redolent of the 'Manichean sect', despite his

[91] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 478.
[92] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 478.
[93] CI, §193.
[94] CI, §545.
[95] CI, §544.
[96] B. P. Levack, 'Baruch Spinoza: the non-existence of the devil, 1661, 1675', in B. P. Levack (ed.), *The Witchcraft Sourcebook* (London, 2015), p. 372.
[97] Levack, *Spinoza*, pp. 372-3.

own embrace of Augustine's anti-Manicheism.[98] Similarly, even friends who tried to defend him against accusations of Socinianism had trouble to swallow his claims that 'all devils had once been men', noting that 'our seer does not believe in any Satan or fallen angel whom the Lord saw fall from heaven like lightning'.[99] Similarly, the macrocosmic human form of the heavens and world of spirits raised questions about a similar anthropomorphic organisation for the planes of hell, which would oppose a divine grand man to an infernal grand man of equal power. Divided on the question, Swedenborg conceded the existence of an 'infernal grand body', yet as a mere twisted and dysfunctional counterpart of his *Homo Maximus*, rather than a functional alter ego.[100]

2) Swedenborg's rising fame as a seer (1758-1761)

a) Currency crisis, break of Swedenborg's anonymity and first reactions

Swedenborg's growing fame from the 1760s onwards influenced his soul-body views, which he used both as a vessel to spread his theology and a discursive tool to defend his doctrines. Scholars have often overlooked how his fame, which was largely discussed in high circles and made him an advisor for high-placed Hat government officials, prompted him to work on pressing doctrinal clarifications, in the hope of seizing on his growing momentum and gain followers. Following the release of his five shorter London works in 1758, Swedenborg sought to expand upon his millenarian claims by producing a large exegesis of the book of Revelation, to complement his previous interpretation of the opening books of Genesis and Exodus and outline the doctrines of his New Jerusalem. Those efforts led to a lengthy et unfinished manuscript titled *Apocalypsis Explicata* (*The Apocalypse Explained*, unpublished, 1759), almost as long as *Arcana Coelestia*.[101] Scholars have long struggled to explain why Swedenborg stopped short from completing

[98] Acton, *Cuno*, p. 67.
[99] Acton, *Cuno*, p. 80. On 'all devils…' see Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 368.
[100] CI, §553:3 and DP, §204.
[101] J. Elliott, *Teaching of the New Jerusalem concerning the Lord by E. Swedenborg* (London, 2019), viii.

the work just three and half chapters before its end.[102] Evidence suggests that this was partly due to a new political crisis which mobilised Swedenborg in the *Riksdag*.

Two years into the Seven Years War, Sweden found itself in deepened political and economic turmoil, agonizing over pressing calls for reform in parliament and facing rampant inflation. Like many other members of the Swedish House of Nobles, Swedenborg was concerned with maintaining the value of his Swedish assets along with the profits of copper sales from his mining estates. This prompted him in 1760 to produce a series of parliamentary memorials pressing for the return to a pure metallic currency, along with an adjustment of exchange rates.[103] Swedenborg also took a firm stance against the mercantilist aristocrat Anders Nordencrantz, who formulated vehement attacks in the *Riksdag* against the Hat's foreign, economic and domestic policies.[104]

However, in the *Riksdag*, Swedenborg was no longer a mere retired assessor lobbying to defend his financial interests. His religious views and spiritual powers were starting to be discussed and attracted growing political interest. His anonymity as an independent theologian had first been partially broken in 1758, following his wish to import and distribute his new publications in Sweden.[105] To do so, Swedenborg had been forced to acknowledge and disclose his authorship of *De Coelo et de Inferno* to the Swedish Board of Censors, then still presided by his friend Niclas von Oelreich, who was facing mounting pressures to resign over various controversies.[106] Following the release of his shorter works and their partial diffusion in the country, with a first copy of *De Coelo* given to the count Gustaf Bonde (1682-1764), president of the *Bergscollegium*, Swedenborg's authorship became widely known in Swedish circles, while his reputation

[102] Elliott, *Teaching*, p. viii. A reworked version, *Apocalypsis Revelata*, would eventually be published in Amsterdam in 1766.
[103] For Swedenborg's memorials on the Swedish currency and copper, see Ryder III, pp. 461-72.
[104] *SBL*, 'Anders Nordencrantz'.
[105] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 529.
[106] On Swedenborg's anonymity, see Roy-Di Piazza, 2020, p. 489 and Johnson, *Dreams*, xxiv. On von Oelreich, see *SBL*, 'Niclas von Oelreich'

also reached Germany by 1760.[107] Noteworthy are the early criticisms from the famous theologian from Leipzig Johan August Ernesti (1707-1781) who denounced Swedenborg's *Arcana Coelestia* as a work 'defacing scripture' produced by a 'heretic'.[108] Ernesti would become one of Swedenborg's most ardent and enduring detractors, scathingly criticizing his religious works, openly calling for his punishment, and later relentlessly persecuting Swedenborg's followers.[109]

b) The clairvoyant advisor: extraordinary episodes and royal protection

Nevertheless, although his theological doctrines triggered heated debates, Swedenborg's reputation as a seer able to confer with spirits and to reveal secrets like the Sami shamans had been growing exponentially following a series of internationally discussed episodes. These included a prescient vision at a formal dinner in Gothenburg about the great Stockholm fire (1759), the recovery of a lost receipt for Madame de Marteville through the help of her deceased husband (1760), and finally, the revelation of a secret to the Swedish queen, allegedly passed to Swedenborg by her deceased brother (1761).[110] The latter event had taken place to deliberately challenge Swedenborg's rumoured abilities in 1761, and it seems likely that the secret revealed by Swedenborg was related to the queen's failed Swedish coup of 1756.[111] This led the queen to believe in Swedenborg's powers, a support which would prove crucial in the last years of his life when his followers and doctrines were prosecuted by the Swedish church.[112]

As a result of those episodes, many high-placed figures of the State sought to consult Swedenborg as a seer during the early 1760s. Apart from von Höpken, Carl Gustaf

[107] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 488. On Gustaf Bonde as an early recipient of *De Coelo*, see Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 271.
[108] Johnson, *Dreams*, xxiv.
[109] Johnson, *Dreams*, xxiv-xxv.
[110] For a more detailed account of those episodes, see Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 489 and Sigstedt, *Epic*, pp. 270-86.
[111] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 281.
[112] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 489.

Tessin, the former prime minister and then governor of the future king Gustav III, also grew very interested in the seer's ideas and 'visions'. Tessin visited him twice at his Stockholm house, in March and June 1760. The former prime minister had tasked assessor Swedenborg with financial Hats dealings towards the end of his own premiership ten years ago, but had likely never met him in person before.[113] Like many who were primarily drawn to Swedenborg because of his alleged extraordinary powers, Tessin had a mixed reaction to the latter's theological writings, dubbing some of them as 'fanatical' while expressing fascination for their 'peculiar connection' and 'studied thought'.[114] Similarly to early reviewers of *De Cultu* in 1745, Tessin also drew unfavourable parallel with a competing revelation, writing that 'all this may be read with the same credence that one gives to Mohammed's *Alkoran*'.[115] For Tessin, the revealed nature of Swedenborg's writings nevertheless closely matched his prophetic persona, as he recorded how Swedenborg's avowed goal was 'to lead the world away from darkness and error at a time where the existence of God was almost completely denied'.[116] When Swedenborg reportedly assured the former prime minister that he would soon be appointed to the heavenly Privy Council after death, Tessin chuckled 'I thanked him but assured him that I had enough of that in this life'.[117]

The split position of Tessin towards Swedenborg was not unusual, as many readers were torn between their rejection of his unorthodox theological views, and fascination for his apparent extraordinary powers.[118] Other close allies expressed scepticism about Swedenborg's claims, despite sharing his criticisms of the loose morals and values of Swedish political life. Like his cousin, Linnaeus was an ardent denouncer of the dissolute

[113] Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 513-4. See also Hjern, *Swedenborg in Stockholm* (2012), p. 230.
[114] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 513. See also Sigstedt, *Epic* pp. 273-4. For another example of mixed feelings about Swedenborg's doctrines, see Gustaf Bonde in Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 529, Cuno in Sigstedt, *Epic*, pp. 367-72, and Oetinger in Acton *Letters*, II, pp. 763-4.
[115] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 275.
[116] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 273.
[117] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 273.
[118] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 491.

morals of Swedish politicians, and his private scathing satire of the corrupted, faithless Swedish elites in his *Nemesis Divina* (1758-1765) echoed many of Swedenborg's critiques.[119] Still, Linnaeus privately mocked the credulity of Swedish Hat elites who acted recklessly on the advice of fortune-tellers, although he did not mention Swedenborg by name.[120] Ironically, Linnaeus himself was also criticised by his detractors for his alleged delusional religious pretentions, being regularly accused of seeing himself as a 'Second Adam'.[121]

Overall, and although Swedenborg was certainly not the only seer to be consulted by Swedish politicians at the time, his prophetic claims went far beyond the usual range of revelations made by other popular fortune-tellers in Sweden, ranging from the Sami noaidis to high-class 'siare' (seers) like the German noblewoman Fröken Höffern.[122] Nevertheless, the next generations of Swedish fortune-tellers such as Ulrica Arfvidsson (1734-1801), the Finnish adventurer Henrik Gustaf Ulfvenklou (1756–1819), Charlotta Roos (1771-1809, spouse of Swedenborgian Sven Roos) or the mystic necromancer and Finnish royal secretary Gustav Björnram all hoped to emulate Swedenborg's posterity as an influential clairvoyant advisor.[123]

c) Disciples, soul-body and the doctrine of the New Jerusalem (1763-1767)

Swedenborg's rising fame in Sweden more broadly coincided with a decade of freer debate and radicalization in Sweden. [124] The 1760s have typically been identified as the beginning of the spread of Enlightenment ideas in the country, a spread reflected in

[119] Petri, *Nemesis Divina*.
[120] Petri, *Nemesis Divina*.
[121] Harrison, *Second Adam*, pp. 879-80.
[122] On Höffern see C. Forsstrand, *Spåkvinnor och trollkarlar. Minne och anteckningar från Gustav III:s Stockholm* (Stockholm, 1913), pp. 12-4.
[123] C. Nordmann, *Gustave III, un démocrate couronné* (Lille, 1986), p. 216.
[124] P. Ihalainen, 'The Enlightenment sermon: towards practical religion and a sacred community', in J. van Eijnatten (ed.), *Preaching, Sermon and Cultural Change in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Leiden, 2008) pp. 254-5.

literature, the press, but also in preaching sermons.[125] It is in this context that he started to attract a religious following, while his soul-body views were repurposed in his criticisms against other religious groups. For instance, hoping to thwart accusations of enthusiasm against his own New Jerusalem, Swedenborg dismissed the Quakers as 'enthusiasts' and took advantage of the recent death of Nicolas von Zinzendorf (1760) to attack his Moravian enemies as 'Anti-Christs' similar to Arians, arguing that he had witnessed the deceased Zinzendorf and Moravian spirits being cast away to remote parts of the *Homo Maximus*, where their lack of faith translated into further remoteness and spatial estrangement.[126] In contrast, those who freely embraced the New Jerusalem would, he claimed, become associated with higher planes of existence within the grand body of God. In his *de Divina Sapientia* (*Divine Love and Wisdom*, Amsterdam, 1763), Swedenborg outlined such planes by detailing how the soul, the human *mens* and the body all 'correspond' to three 'celestial, spiritual and natural planes' within the *Homo Maximus*.[127] Those attacks only increased the need for short and clearer summaries of his doctrines to gain followers. His first attempt at doctrinal synthesis, *De Nova Hierosolyma et ejus doctrina coelesti* (*The New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine*, London, 1758) was followed by a prolific run of seven short works between 1763 and 1764, four of which specifically outlined the theology of his 'New Jerusalem'.[128] Swedenborg was now seventy five years old, and to print those works, the ageing prophet resorted to printers and publishers in Amsterdam, whom he claimed, deciphered his worsening handwriting 'as well as the English do'.[129] John Lewis Senior had died, and Swedenborg's rising fame also probably helped him secure a cheaper printer and

[125] Ihalainen, *Sermon*, pp. 252-3.
[126] CJ(C), §83-90. On Quakers as enthusiasts, see §83. On Moravians as 'Anti-Christs' and Arians, see §88. On spiritual estrangement in the *Maximus Homo*, see Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 482.
[127] SA, §270. See also D. Taylor, *Hidden Levels of the Mind: Swedenborg's theory of consciousness* (Bryn Athyn, 1982), pp. 6-7.
[128] DD, SS, PD, FI (Amsterdam, 1763).
[129] Robsahm, *Memoirs*, pp. 16-7.

publisher there, in a city that was much closer to Stockholm than London, and in which he concentrated most of his foreign assets.

d) Spreading the word, and the new priests of the New Jerusalem

In contrast to enduring devotional narratives presenting him as a 'passive' prophet who 'unlike many sectarians, never tried to persuade anyone and still less to force his explanations upon others', evidence demonstrates that Swedenborg took an active part in cultivating networks of followers and disciples in strategic positions of influence to spread his doctrines.[130]

In his home country, Swedenborg's authorship was already known by many high-ranking Hat-party members, and as we have seen, he freely discussed his gifts with influential aristocrats such as the former prime minister Tessin, the Baron and mineralogist Daniel Tilas (1712–1772) and the current prime minister von Höpken.[131] During the *Riskdag* of 1760-1762, Swedenborg continued to share his works with high-placed participants in Swedish political life, such as the *Vetenskapsakademien* secretary and chancery member Anton von Stjärnman (1695-1765). Swedenborg also repeatedly approached every Swedish bishop in the hope that some would support his doctrines, such as the bishop of Skara Engelbert Halenius (1700-1767), a Hat party leader and member of the *Sekretatskottet* who sat in the secretariat of trade and manufacturing and the chamber of commerce and economy.[132] Swedenborg also gifted his *Arcana Coelestia* to the bishop of Turku (and future archbishop of Uppsala) Carl Fredrik Mennander (1712-1786), a friend of Linnaeus and a learned man with a strong interest in anatomy and chemistry.[133] Although none (except bishop Halenius) ended up openly supporting his doctrines,

[130] For reference to this quote by Carl Robsahm, see Robsahm, *Memoirs*, p. 5.
[131] See Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 533. On Tilas and the last judgment, see Sigstedt *Epic*, pp. 275-6.
[132] *SBL*, 'Engelbert Halenius'.
[133] *SBL*, 'Carl Fredrik Mennander'. For reference to Swedenborg sharing his works with all those figures, see Sigstedt, pp. 270-2. On Swedenborg's letter to Mennander, see Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 617-9.

Swedenborg recorded that 'with one exception, all the bishops had treated me kindly'.[134] His followers also commented that Swedenborg had sent various copies of his theological books to 'each and every one of the English bishops' without evidence that he ever received any response.[135] Yet the 1769 trial against 'Swedenborgianism' would later be led by two Swedish bishops and former friends: Eric Lampberg of Gothenburg and Filenius of Linköping, Swedenborg's own nephew.

In the meantime, and despite his proselytizing efforts and rising fame, Swedenborg remained deeply concerned about preserving his anonymity abroad. For instance, when in August 1760 his former superior at the *Bergscollegium* Gustav Bonde forwarded copies of the London works to the baron Louis von Hatzel, a mystically-minded chargé d'affaires in Rotterdam, Swedenborg reaffirmed that, for the sake of preserving his anonymity, he could not reply directly to foreign inquiries, but only via intermediaries.[136] Despite these precautions, his reputation as a seer continued to attract international attention, such as from the Swiss physiognomist Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741–1801) who not only wished to learn how to communicate with spirits, but was also fascinated by Swedenborg's 'physiognomic' work about the transfiguration of emotions on the face, a theme that ran from his earliest soul-body research through the last of his theological writings.[137]

Swedenborg became especially famous in the German principalities where his former mineralogical and philosophical works had been published.[138] In 1763, he received the enthusiastic support of a young Immanuel Kant, who had bought and reviewed a set of *Arcana Coelestia,* and answered the German aristocrat Charlotte von Knobloch on 10

[134] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 393. On Halenius supporting Swedenborg's doctrines, see Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 333.
[135] Acton, *Letter*s II, p. 651.
[136] On Hatzel, see Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 530.
[137] On Lavater's wish to obtain Swedenborg's gifts, see Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 643.
[138] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 556.

August 1763 that the seer's powers presented 'the greatest evidential force […] and really deprives all conceivable doubt of excuse'.[139] As we will see later, although Swedenborg's correspondence with Kant is not extant, his last soul-body work *De Commercio et Animae Corporis* (1769) was partly written as a response to Kant's later attacks.[140]

In 1765, the Pietist, Tübingen-based theologian Christian Friedrich Oetinger also began a six-year correspondence with Swedenborg, which led him to translate several of his works in German.[141] The same year, as Swedenborg was ready to depart from Gothenburg to Amsterdam to print his *Apocalypsis Revelata,* he met and recruited two important disciples for his New Jerusalem: the gymnasium lecturer Gabriel Andersson Beyer (1721–1779) and Johan Rosén (1726–1773), a poet, teacher and polemicist journalist-editor for various newspapers, including the *Gothenburg Magazine* (*Götheborgske Magazinet,* co-published with the lector Johan Gothenius).[142] The conversions of Beyer and Rosén, along with Swedenborg's presence at dinners in town became a public sensation, with their colleagues recording that 'Swedenborg was here [...] and was constantly invited out. He afterward departed by boat for Holland. Opinions among us vary greatly concerning him'.[143]

Gothenburg was soon to become an active centre for spreading Swedenborg's doctrines in Sweden. A maritime port and natural point of entry for his printed books, Gothenburg was also the city where Swedenborg had reportedly experienced his foundational clairvoyant vision of the Stockholm fire which had launched his fame as a seer. He would regularly correspond and visit members of reading groups formed there to study his theology. Moreover, the status of Gothenburg as a sailing harbour tied well with his

[139] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 489.
[140] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 489.
[141] On Oetinger and Swedenborg, see Hanegraaff, *Secrets of Heaven*, pp. 67-83.
[142] Sigstedt, *Epic*, pp. 321-2.
[143] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 323.

hopes of global missionary evangelization. In 1768, a new reading group formed in the city strategically included leading officials in the Swedish East India Company, such as the advisor Sven Wenngren, the director of the company Niclas Sahlgren, Gabriel Beyer, the mayor of Gothenburg along with local merchants, cargo officers, and local sea captains such as Peter Hammarberg, Beyer's brother-in-law.[144]

Swedenborg was eager to build momentum for his followers, and kept on describing his disciples as being part of a greater revolution happening in the heavens and spiritual world, while the earthly spread of the New Church was progressively taking place. This was exemplified by a letter from February 1767, in which Swedenborg wrote to Beyer that he saw:

> … daily spirits and angels descending and ascending to the number of from 10 to 20,000 and being set in order. Gradually, as that heaven is formed, so the New Church commences and increases. The universities in Christendom are now first being instructed, and from them come new priests; for the new Heaven has no influence with the old, which keeps itself too learned in justification by faith alone.

In this quote, Swedenborg referred to Beyer as one of those 'new priests' of the New Jerusalem, while the 'universities of Christendom' probably referred (generously) to the Gothenburg schools where Beyer and Rosén were teaching, along with the Swedish and German universities where Swedenborg's writings were available. Beyer had given private lectures at Uppsala until 1748 and was now teaching at the gymnasium in Gothenburg.[145] Rosén on the other hand, had given up his academic career as a university lecturer early to become a high-school teacher and auxiliary priest.[146] Both men had graduated as theology doctors from Greifswald in 1762.[147] As we will see, it was Beyer and Rosén's conversions which prompted Swedish ecclesiastical authorities to act against the growing spread of 'Swedenborgianism'.

[144] On Hammarberg, see Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 630.
[145] *SBL*, 'Gabriel Andersson Beyer'.
[146] *SBL*, 'Johan Rosén'.
[147] *SBL*, 'Beyer' and 'Rosén'.

e) Soul-body, sexuality and marriage (1766-1768)

By the time Swedenborg left Gothenburg for Holland to print his *Apocalypsis Revelata*, he had been contemplating a work on married love for years.[148] As we have seen, in the 1740s Swedenborg had reframed his soul-body views within a treatise on the 'love of God' and the primordial Adamic couple. He also frequently resorted to metaphors and simile about love and sexual desire, even in anatomical contexts such as in *Regnum Animale*, where he wrote about how the trachea and oesophagus have an 'intimacy' and 'nearness' so great that they can be said to 'mutually embrace and kiss'.[149] We have also seen how Swedenborg frequently eroticised the pursuit of knowledge and regarded love and sexuality as legitimate bodily needs endowed with higher spiritual meaning. It was only time that he revisited the topic within his broader framework of the grand body of God. Nevertheless, as we will see in the mid-sixties he also started using soul-body to challenge trinitarianism, deploying it as a metaphor to indicate a complementary, indivisible unity between two things.[150]

Despite being a lifelong bachelor in his early eighties, Swedenborg believed that he had the authority to deliver practical recommendations about marital love, morals and sexuality. Widely known as a courteous old gentleman and *cavaliere*, he had managed to maintain a largely respectable reputation as a bachelor by acting cautiously in the presence of women. [151] His neighbor Carl Robsham recorded how Swedenborg always insisted that one of his servants be present when receiving female visitors and 'disconsolate widows' at his house, for fear that 'women are clever, and they might pretend that I desired to become too intimate with them'.[152] Still, there was something rather provocative about a treatise on marriage, sexual intercourse, infernal sexual

[148] See manuscripts *De Conjugio I* (1764), *De Conjugio II* (1766) and *De Conjugio III* (1767).
[149] RA, I, §85.
[150] AM, §118.
[151] Robsahm, *Memoirs*, p. 16.
[152] Robsahm, *Memoirs*, p. 16.

fantasies of deflowering virgins, and post-mortem conjugial delights from an octogenarian and lifelong bachelor. At a broader level, Swedenborg's relaxed views about marriage and sexuality had been influenced by his Augustinianism, like Matin Luther himself.[153] However, his views on marital love appear more closely informed by his exposure to Moravian theology in 1740s.[154] Although he was now a vocal opponent of Moravianism, his views about the holiness and sacramental nature of sexual intercourse remained largely in line with the teachings of the London Herrnhuttists.[155]

The target readership of Swedenborg's new work, titled *Delitiae Sapientiae de Amore Conjugiali; post quas sequuntur Voluptates insaniae de amore scortatorio* (*The Delights of Wisdom on the subject of Conjugial Love, followed by the Gross Pleasures of Folly on the subject of Scortatory Love*, Amsterdam, 1768) remained an upper-class audience of learned men, as evidenced by references to pre-nuptial contracts and the small proportion of women fluently reading neo-Latin at the time in Sweden.[156] Its title also features technical terms, as the rare Latin noun *conjugialis* (derived from the substantive *conjugium*, 'marriage') used in contrast with the more common *conjugalis* from *conjux*,'a married partner'. Swedenborg's preference for 'Conjugial' rather than 'Conjugal' likely reflected his emphasis on the institution of marriage rather than on the married partner, which he contended, could change after going to heaven. For many Christians, such a promise was an outrageous statement.[157] The 'Heavenly nuptial games in the soul' promised to the virtuous again also prompted Swedenborg's work to be accused of gross

[153] L. Roper, *Martin Luther Renegade and Prophet* (London, 2017) p. 285.
[154] For a summary of those positions, see P. Peucker, 'In the Blue Cabinet: Moravians, Marriage and Sex, *Journal of Moravian History*, 10 (2011), pp. 7-37.
[155] Peucker, *Blue Cabinet*, p. 7.
[156] *Conjugial Love by E. Swedenborg*, trans. by John Chadwick (London, 1996), vii-viii.
[157] D. H. Kaiser, 'Whose Wife Will She Be at the Resurrection? Marriage and Remarriage in Early Modern Russia', *Slavic Review*, 62(2) (2003), pp. 303, 323.

Mohammedanism, although he had himself described the delight of the soul primarily as the 'marriage of love and wisdom' (§8:2).[158]

More crucially for our study, *De Amore Conjugiali* featured new memorabilia about the interaction of soul and body (§182) which he would reinclude in the last published synthesis of his theology in 1771.[159] The memorabilia, which featured allegorical motives most redolent of Swedenborg's former poetry, mobilised soul-body to refute the doctrine of physical resurrection ('how could such stinking bits of corpses be gathered together and united with souls?').[160] He presented marriage as the' delight of the soul', while 'true conjugial love' lead to the androgynous reunification of male and female bodies in heaven.[161] Swedenborg also challenged the very idea that Adam and Eve might have had different souls, giving the example of child-like spirits from the most ancient Adamic 'Golden Age' who possess 'two bodies but are united into only one soul'.[162]

III. Ancient wisdom and the Asian origins of Christianity

a) The lost pre-Biblical Word preserved in *Tartaria*

Swedenborg's soul-body programme in *De Amore Conjugiali* was also part of a wider research about sacred philology, which tied into his former Leibnizian project for a universal algebraic language to prove the existence of the soul. This research was particularly concerned with the links between soul-body and scripture in primordial times, and was more broadly redolent of an abundant body of scholarship on the history of religion and paganism.[163]

[158] On heavenly nuptial games, see AM, §183:7. On marriage of love and wisdom, see also VR, §737. On Mohammedanism in AM, see Acton, *Cuno's memoirs*, p. 19.
[159] VR, §697.
[160] On corpses and souls, see AM, §182:5.
[161] AM, §158, §177-9.
[162] AM, §77.
[163] M. Pfeffer, 'Paganism, natural reason, and immortality: Charles Blount and John Toland's histories of the soul', *Intellectual History Review*, 31(4) (2021), p. 574.

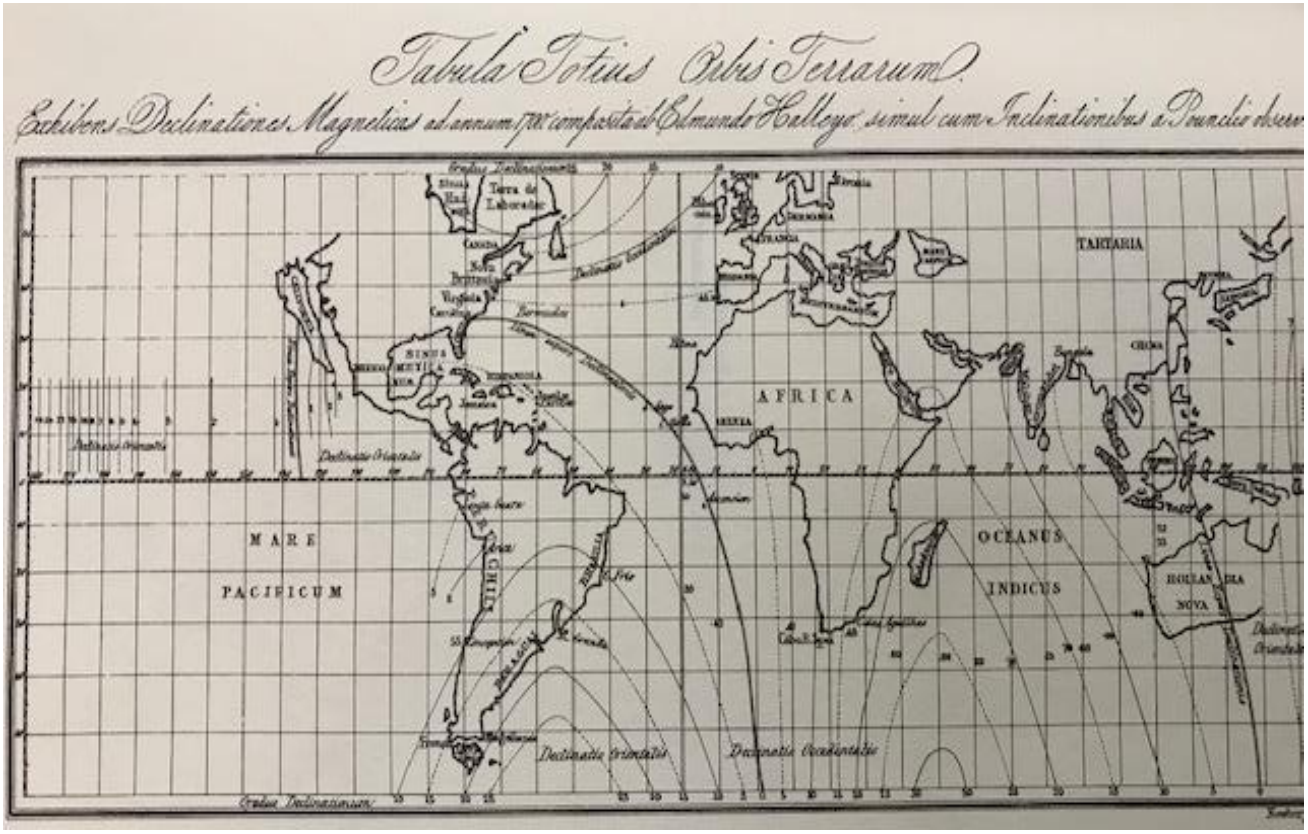
Exploring such subjects led Swedenborg to take even more drastic stances on the unequally divine origins of the biblical canon. Expanding on his statements from *Arcana Coelestia,* Swedenborg developed how various passages of the Old Testament alluded to a pre-biblical revelation, made of three lost texts still preserved in 'central Asia', within the loosely defined continent of *Magna Tartaria* (see Figure 21).[164] Those three lost texts together formed 'the ancient Word', an inmost divine revelation purely written in 'correspondence's, upon which the later Pentateuch was built.[165] Swedenborg claimed that the first of these so-called texts was the *Libro Bellorum Jehovae*, 'the Wars of Jehovah', in reference to Numbers 21:14-15.[166] This was illustrated by memorabilia describing how in heaven, most ancient spirits from the Golden Age still used it for their worship, and called themselves the 'Army of the Lord Jehovi' as a result.[167] The second text was titled the *Enuntiata Prophetica* ('prophetic utterances') based on what he saw as an error of translation from the original Hebrew in Numbers 21:27-30 -- one of the few instances where Swedenborg challenged the Latin text based on his knowledge of Hebrew.[168] Finally, the third text was identified as the famous 'book of Jasher' alluded to in 2 Samuel 1:18, and Joshua 10:12,13.[169] The theme of a pre-biblical Word can be traced to the very beginning of Swedenborg's research in exegesis, sacred history and philology in the early 1750s.[170] Nevertheless, the idea that an ancient revelation was still preserved in central Asia was a more recent development, whose contexts help situate his final joint quest for the human soul and the 'soul of scripture'.

As a seer, Swedenborg contended that all dispensations before the Christian church had been located in 'Asia', while the Christian church was the only one of the four

[164] AC, §2686, VR, §279, CL §77.
[165] VR, §279:3.
[166] SS(P) §15.
[167] See AM, §75 and VR, §279.
[168] VR, §265.
[169] VR, §265.
[170] See AC, §2686 and ES, §6107.

dispensations ('Adamic, Noachian, Israelitish, and Christian') to have spread on both Eastern and Western European territories.[171] Although he did not comment on the reasons why the Christian world eventually extended to Europe, nor if there was a higher spiritual purpose for such a translocation, he was nonetheless adamant that the Noachian *Antiqua Ecclesia* provided a common origin for the Western and Eastern religions, and had ranged from China and Siberia to the middle eastern territories of Syria, Mesopotamia, Assyria, Canaan and Chaldea.[172]

FIGURE 21 : Edmund Halley's planisphere in Swedenborg's *Principia rerum naturalium*, vol. I, (Leipzig, 1734) in which *Tartaria* encompasses much of the Western, central and northern parts of Asia.



b) Hieroglyphs, ancient wisdom and the human soul

As a result of this supposed common 'Asian' cradle, Swedenborg regarded Chinese ideograms (which he never studied), Egyptian hieroglyphs (which he often promised to

[171] AR, §11.
[172] CO, §39.

study) and Biblical Hebrew (which he took over in his late fifties) as three ancient hieroglyphic languages all with a common divine origin rooted in 'Asia'.[173] Construing the three alphabets as 'hieroglyphic' in nature was a common view during the early modern period.[174] Swedenborg had linked his doctrine of correspondences to both Egyptian hieroglyphs and Asia since *Arcana Coelestia*.[175] Although he never ventured into discussing Chinese ideograms in details, the fact they were the only writing system still used in a living language reinforced his belief that a former divine revelation written in 'correspondences' and brought to mankind before Moses was still preserved in central Asia.[176] This echoed popular medieval legends about the oriental Christian kingdom of the Nestorian Prester John in the travels of William of Rubruk, Sir John Mandeville and Marco Polo.[177] *De Amore Conjugiali* tied into these stories by showcasing memorabilia of ancient spirits from the 'Silver Age' who claimed they were 'coming from the peoples of Asia' and that they used 'hieroglyphs'.[178] Similarly, Swedenborg wrote that most ancient spirits from the 'Golden Age' would only tolerate the company of younger spirits who originated from China.[179] Associating hieroglyphs with the secrets of the human soul and pure wisdom, he claimed that newcomer spirits in heaven were given mysterious 'copper plaques covered with hieroglyphs' once they had accepted the true doctrines about the interaction between the soul and the body.[180]

The study of Egyptian hieroglyphs had long been divided into two camps, from sceptics like John Woodward, who dismissed them as mere superstitious paintings, to scholars

[173] For Swedenborg's promise to publish a study of hieroglyphs, see Acton, *Letters* II, pp. 755-6.
[174] See e.g. W. Warburton, *Essai sur les hiéroglyphes des Égyptiens* (Paris, 1744), p. 109, and Harrison, *Fall of Man*, pp. 194-5.
[175] AC, §5702, §6692, §7097, §7779, §9391, §10407. See also NH, §51.
[176] See AR, §11: *Quaerite de eo in China, et forte invenietis illud ibi apud Tartaros*, ('search it in China and you will find it among the Tatars'). See also AM, §77.
[177] M. P. Caire-Jabinet, 'Le Royaume du Prêtre Jean', *L'Histoire*, 22 (1980), pp. 36-43. For John Mandeville, see C. Ginsburg, *Le Fromage et les Vers* (Paris, 1993), p. 99.
[178] AM, §76.
[179] VR, §279:4
[180] AM, §182:7-8.

like Piero Valeriano, Nicolas Caussin, Francis Bacon, Thomas Browne, Athanasius Kircher and William Warburton, who all believed in their higher symbolical and spiritual significance.[181] In Sweden, research into hieroglyphs was also typically associated with the quest for a lost ancient knowledge, and the writings George Stiernhielm and Johan Skytte on the latter read much like Scandinavian counterparts of Ralph Cudwoth and Henry More.[182] In the 1680s, that is, several decades before Newton himself endorsed the idea of a unique primordial Noachic religion in his *Irenicum*, the Swedish clergyman Matthias Wichaeus (1659-1694) had exposed in his *De Inferis* (1686) how ancient myths containing remnants of eternal truth, which lead to the timeless transmission of the *doctrinae Adamiticae* in an increasingly corrupted way from the Antediluvians through the descendants of Noah.[183] Like Swedenborg after him, Wicchaeus contended that the ancient philosophy of Babylonians-Chaldeans and Egyptians was nevertheless still preserved.[184] At Uppsala in 1701, Swedish scholar Erik Frondin (1681-?) also linked the lost adamic wisdom to hieroglyphs by identifying the God Saturn to Noah's son Cham, whose scribe Hermes Trimesgistus was credited as being the 'inventor of hieroglyphs'.[185]

Although Swedenborg did not mention Hermes in his studies, he did attribute like Frondin an Egyptian origin to ancient Greek wisdom and mythology.[186] He also aligned with Wicchaeus when writing that 'The ancient presented dogmas and myths through hieroglyphs; this is well known among the Egyptians; others say likewise of the Chinese'.[187] In his quest for the Egyptian origins of ancient Greek wisdom, Swedenborg had furthermore praised the 'divine genius' contained within the pseudo-aristotelian *De*

[181] D. Levitin, *Ancient Wisdom in the Age of New Science* (Cambridge, 2015), p. 208. See also Harrison, *Fall of Man*, pp. 194-5 and W. Warburton, *The Divine legation of Moses* (1738), book 4, vol. II.
[182] Helander, *Neo-Latin*, pp. 427-8.
[183] Helander, *Neo-Latin*, p. 427. For reference to Newton's views about Noachic religion, see *Irenicum*, (Newton Project), p. 5.
[184] Helander, *Neo-Latin*, p. 428.
[185] Helander, *Neo-Latin*, p. 429.
[186] See e.g. Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 684-5.
[187] Jonsson, *Drama*, p. 32.

Secretiore Parte Divinae Sapientiae secundum Aegyptos, which he had annotated in the 1654 edition of Aristotle's works compiled by Du Val, the *Opera Omnia* published in Paris.[188] Despite being sceptical about its authenticity, Swedenborg thought the manuscript contained a highest 'divinity' and most spiritual secrets about Egyptian wisdom, which 'in many respects they seem to equal the doctrines of our own religion which are altogether above the light of nature, and which are the most deeply hidden of all.'[189]

He had also noted how the Czech Moravian philosopher John Amos Comenius 'presents the soul hieroglyphically', a statement which highlights how the human soul and hieroglyphs were commonly seen as parts of a same quest for adamic knowledge during the early modern period.[190] Towards the end of his life, Swedenborg's interest in hieroglyphs grew steadily.[191] He frequently promised his new followers, such as the Anglican vicar Thomas Hartley (1709-1784) and the physician Husband Messiter a treatise on the subject which never came.[192] In return, his take on hieroglyphs attracted various illuminist followers, such as the French alchemist and former Benedictine monk Antoine Joseph Pernety (1716-1801) who had published *Les Fables Egyptiennes et Grecques* in 1758, a treatise which classically attributed Egyptian hieroglyphs to Hermes.[193] Swedenborg's primordialist stance on 'Chinese hieroglyphs' was also in line with Bacon, Brown and John Webb's *An historical essay endeavoring a probability that the language of the empire of China is the primitive language* (1669), although Swedenborg's own views were much less detailed than those scholars.[194] His belief in a

[188] *Notebook*, pp. 508-9.
[189] *Notebook*, pp. 508-9.
[190] Jonsson, *Drama*, p. 32.
[191] AC §6917, §6692, §7097, §7926, §9011, §9391; SS, §20, § 51; AM, §76, §182, §342; VR, §201, 693, §833, §852.
[192] Acton, *Letter*s, II, pp. 684-5.
[193] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 728. On Hermes, see A. J. Pernety, *Les Fables Egyptiennes et Grecques* (Paris, 1758), p. 254. Note that Pernety only became acquainted with Swedenborg's doctrines in the 1780s.
[194] For reference to the views of Bacon, Browne and Webb on Chinese ideograms, see Harrison, *Fall of Man*, pp. 194-5.

Chinese primordial wisdom aligning with the Christian revelation was most likely borrowed from Christian Wolff, following his review of Wolff's writings on Chinese philosophy in the 1730s.[195] Whilst teaching in Halle, Wolff had produced a controversial treatise titled *Oratio de Sinarum philosophia practica* (1721) where the latter had affirmed the moral and spiritual superiority of Confucianism in order to achieve rational knowledge of the divine.[196]

Overall, Swedenborg's statement that a loosely defined 'Asia' was the birthplace of all preceding dispensations of mankind tied well with his global prophetic ambitions. He was not alone in doing so, as emphasizing the primordial unity of the 'Asiatic, African, European and Chinese' nations was a common apologetic strategy on both sides of the hieroglyph debate.[197] Moreover, the existence of an ancient, pre-Christian wisdom preserved in Asia not only affirmed the inmost compatibility of the New Jerusalem doctrines with Asian philosophy: it further opened new prospects for religious conversion in other territories.

c) Global revelation, and the spiritually highest African spirits

As a counterpart of his research programme on a hieroglyphical ancient wisdom still preserved in Asia, Swedenborg affirmed that a new revelation of the doctrines of the New Jerusalem was currently taking place in central Africa. In De *Amore Conjugiali*, Swedenborg expanded a series of affirmative statements about the spiritual faculties of Sub-Saharan Africans, which he ranked as the spiritually-highest of all people.[198] This alleged superior spiritual receptivity was part of a wider 'New Church' revelation which, he claimed, was directly dictated by angels to African populations in the inmost parts of

[195] The only quote referring to Chinese ideograms is found in Swedenborg's commentary of Wolff's *Psychologica Empirica* from 1734. See Jonsson, *Drama*, p. 32
[196] W. Drechsler, *Christian Wolff*, p. 113.
[197] Levitin, *Ancient Wisdom*, p. 211.
[198] UJ(C) §73, §75; AM, §113-4. On the natural rationality of Africans, see VR, §838:2.

the continent, and steered by the spirit of Augustine of Hippo, the bishop of Africa.[199] Swedenborg claimed that such a process had not yet reached the coasts where the colonial settlements were located, and for this reason remained yet largely unknown to the world.[200] At the time the centre of the African continent remained largely unexplored by Lutheran missionaries which led to many speculations as to the civilizations it might contain.

Swedenborg's assessments of the superior spiritual virtues of Africans reflected widespread Western tropes about the virtues associated with a 'primitive' lifestyle. For Swedenborg, Africans lived in gentile primordial ways closer to the divine, away from the corruptive influence of Western civilization. He had celebrated as early as 1715 the innocent purity of native Saami tribes living under the midnight hyperborean sun, paying tribute to an idealised, free-from-corrupted-civilization tribalism redolent of the Ovidian Golden Age.[201] Swedenborg held a Lutheran view of Man as a spiritually-decadent being, gradually estranged from God through the corruption of civilization. As we have seen in previous chapters, like many scholars at the time his research about the soul was partly motivated by the hope of restoring the prelapsarian faculties of Man and reversing its dramatic results.[202] Sub-Saharan Africans epitomised the virtues of such primordial people, living in a state of closeness to the divine, uncorrupted and innocent, in line with the widespread motif of the noble savage promoted in Montaigne's *Essais* (1580-1588) and in Swedenborg's own time by Rousseau in his *Discours sur l'Origine et les Fondements de l'Inégalité parmi les Hommes* (1755). Such a motive was promoted by travel literature during the period, and Swedenborg owned several books belonging to the

[199] UJ(C), §76. On Augustine, see VR, §840.
[200] UJ(C), §76.
[201] Helander, *Ludus Heliconius*, p. 204.
[202] On such attempts see Harrison, *Fall of Man*, pp. 8-9. In Swedenborg's research, see *De Infinito*, p. 179 and *De Cerebro*, §1198.

genre, from Thomas Herbert's *Relation du voyage de Perse et des Indes Orientales* (1663) to the anonymous *Voyages aux Côtes de Guinée et en Amérique* (1719). [203]

Travelogues, novels and travel biographies were more broadly popular in Sweden during the second half of the eighteenth century.[204] After Swedenborg's death, the trend continued to grow during the 1780s and 1790s, with a surge of translations of foreign works discussing Africans, Asians and slavery in Swedish and theatrical plays, which coincided with the Swedish acquisition of the Caribbean island of St Barthelemy in 1784.[205] Swedenborg's interest in travel literature in the 1750s also intersected with the then-popular plurality of worlds debate. His own treatise on cosmic pluralism *De Telluribus in Mundo nostro Solari* (1758) dealt extensively with the topic of salvation amongst Gentiles from other worlds.[206] Swedenborg's assessments of the spiritual faculties of Africans exhibit common features with his descriptions of the virtues of primordial people from other planets.[207] Such parallels were quite standard, as travel and plurality of worlds literature both relied on the idealised features of Gentiles from far-away lands to criticise Western social orders.

Overall, Swedenborg's stance appears mostly informed by the influence of Moravian global evangelizing efforts, travelling literature, the *mythe du bon sauvage* and biblical traditions assessing the spiritual nature of the land of Africa. Echoing his work on China, Swedenborg had also written about a holy 'Ancient Word' being preserved in 'Africa', probably referring to Egypt.[208] More broadly, since the Middle Ages, Africa had

[203] Bergquist, *Secret*, pp. 469–82.
[204] F. Thomasson, 'Knowledge, Silence and Denial: the Late-Eighteenth century Debate on Slavery and Colonialism in Sweden', in A. Hallengren (ed.) *The Moment is Now: Carl Bernhard Wadström's Revolutionary Voice on Human Trafficking and the Abolition of the African Slave Trade* (West Chester, 2019) p. 38.
[205] Thomasson, *Slavery*, pp. 38 and 40.
[206] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 13.
[207] Compare UJ(C), §76, CL §113, with TE, §158, §162.
[208] UJ(C), §120-1.

frequently been presented as the safe haven for the lost Ten Tribes.[209] Such ideas found new ground in late-eighteenth century literature, as seen in the foundational best-selling narrative of freedman Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative* (1789), who wrote how the customs and manners of Africans were redolent of the pastoral lifestyle of the Jewish patriarchs described in Genesis.[210] The claim that a global embrace of the doctrines of the New Church was taking place in the spiritual world and in large parts of the African continent was not only meant to impress Swedenborg's readers, but reflected the exotic nature of understandings of Africa in Sweden at the time. Like many, Swedenborg drew only a loose distinction between 'Orientals' and 'Africans', and viewed boundaries between the two as blurred and fluid.[211] Although he wrote a separate section on Muslims in the spiritual world, he also emphasised their common rejection with Africans of trinitarian beliefs, and their cultural practice of polygamy, permitted to them 'because they are Orientals'.[212] However, he also argued that, in contrast to Muslims, the higher spiritual nature of Africans inclined them to naturally restrict themselves to one wife, whom they loved according to (Swedenborg's) precepts of true conjugial love.[213]

From Swedenborg's grand statements about the people of those two continents, it is clear that he saw Asia and Africa as having crucial roles within the new and global grand body of God. Heralding those statements, he was to soon openly come out as a servant of the God-Messiah and announce the doctrines of the new Jerusalem to a Western world wrestling with the last convulsions of a bygone Christian dispensation.

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[209] T. Parfitt, *Black Jews in Africa and the Americas* (Cambridge MA, 2013) pp. 3-23. See also C. Kidd, *The Forging of Races: Race and Scripture in the Protestant Atlantic World, 1600–2000*. (Cambridge, 2006).
[210] R. W. Rix, 'The Little Black Boy': William Blake, Carl Bernhard Wadström, and Swedenborg's Africa', in Hallengren (ed.), *The Moment is Now*, p. 135.
[211] On the blurring of the two, see Thomasson, *Slavery*, pp. 40 and 44.
[212] UJ(C), §72.
[213] UJ(C), §77. On Africans and conjugial love, see also AM, §113.

FIGURE 22 : Engraving from Swedenborg's *De Amore Conjugiali* (first English edition, 1790) where African spirits discuss the nature of true marital love (§113). The Swedenborg Society.

IV. 'Emanuel Swedenborg, a Swede': prophet and heretic

1) The heresy trial of Swedenborgianism

a) Disclosure of authorship and attacks from Germany and Sweden (1766-1767)

In the mid-1760s, Swedenborg had continued to target influential individuals in positions of power when sharing his writings, such as the Swedish Ambassador in London Gustaf

Adam von Nolcken, the Swedish ambassador in Paris Gustaf Philip Creutz, the French cardinal, prince-bishop of Strasbourg and landgrave of Alsace Louis Constantin de Rohan (1697-1779), and the Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt Louis IX (1719–1790), with the latter inquiring, like Lavater and many others, how he might learn to speak with the dead like Herr Swedenborg.[214]

Meanwhile, the elderly seer had been absent from Sweden for more than a year, having left for Amsterdam in 1765. This coincided with the *Riksdag* during which the Cap party had retaken power (1765-1766), a year during which Swedenborg stayed in Holland until April 1766, then moved to London again for five months, before returning to Sweden.[215] His return coincided with new tensions surrounding the perceived spread of his ideas in the country, with further attacks continuing to come from Germany. In December 1766, Oetinger wrote to Swedenborg to reveal how difficult it was to endorse him publicly, because of 'scoffers who pronounce me a fanatic', while 'university theologians declare that you must be rejected on account of our errors on the Trinity, and concerning justification as understood after the [Pietist] manner of Dippel'.[216] Oetinger also commented on the attacks from an isolated Kant, who was himself accused of following Swedenborg's doctrines, and had in return published a satirical attack against the seer to clear his name, *Traumes Eines Geistersehers* (*Dreams of a spirit-seer*, 1766).[217] However, in contrast to persistent scholarly claims, the impact at the time of Kant's treatise probably did little to erode Swedenborg's already controversial reputation.

[214] On von Nolcken, see Ryder, IV, p. 465. On Swedish ambassador in Paris and de Rohan, see Acton *Letters*, II, p. 632. For Swedenborg's correspondence with landgrave Louis IX, see Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 736–38. For further correspondence between Swedenborg and the landgrave, see pp. 745–7, 751–7.
[215] Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 467.
[216] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 629.
[217] Despite his public denials, Kant's philosophy would remain durably influenced by Swedenborg See Johnson, *Dreams*, and Florschütz, *Hidden Influence*.

Moreover, Kant's ambiguous tone not only puzzled reviewers, but paradoxically even brought Swedenborg some new followers.[218]

The same year, Swedenborg's ally Niclas von Oelreich was removed from his duties of *censor librorum* of Sweden and was instead appointed to the presidency of the college of commerce.[219] Following Oelreich's removal, the position of *censor librorum* was abolished, and the freedom of the press established.[220] Despite losing an ally at a key censorship position, this new climate of toleration made Swedenborg confident that disclosing his authorship in future writings could only bring him further publicity. His books were already available in most Swedish university universities, and his authorship was well-known amongst the country's elite.[221] After amending his draft material for his new treatise on marital love between 1766 to 1767, he eventually tasked his Amsterdam publisher to feature the subtitle *ab Emanuele Swedenborg, Sueco* ('by Emanuel Swedenborg, a Swede') on the frontpage of his upcoming work. The revelation of his authorial identity represented a bold challenge against the publishing conventions of the time, since to comply with ecclesiastical authority, works dealing with topics of religious and moral controversy were to be published anonymously in their first edition, either in Amsterdam or London.[222] The term 'a Swede' openly signalled Swedenborg as a subject of the Swedish king while placing his writings under the authority of the Swedish Lutheran church, and thus likely prompting a reaction from ecclesiastical authorities. Copies of the book were initially confiscated as they arrived in Gothenburg, although Swedenborg had 38 copies in his possession and the confiscated copies were quickly released to circulate freely.[223] He wrote to Beyer that such actions did not affect him, for

[218] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 490. On new followers, see Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 641.
[219] Acton, *Letters*, I, p. 501.
[220] *SBL*, 'Niclas von Oelreich'.
[221] Roy-Di Piazza, *Ghosts*, p. 490.
[222] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 376.
[223] Ryder, IV, p. 465.

he already had shared copies with 'the Bishops, the House, the Privy Council and their Majesties'.[224] The book, he claimed, had already been 'permitted entrance into Holland, England, Germany, Denmark, France and Spain, and has been well-received'.[225] *De Amore Conjugiali* quickly supplanted *De Coelo* as the most popular and widely distributed book of Swedenborg during his lifetime.[226] Nevertheless, as he soon found out, the Swedish Lutheran church had not waited for the disclosure of his authorship to take measures.

b) Heresy trial of Swedenborgianism in the context of the *Riksdag* crisis of 1768-1769

The heresy trial of 'Swedenborgianism' in Sweden has been covered by previous scholarship and many of its aspects go beyond the scope of our study.[227] Nevertheless, the trial's context and main developments shaped the last years of Swedenborg's life and prompted him to revise many of his positions, including on the interaction between soul and body. The trial formally started in 1768 and dragged for almost ten years, concluding in 1778 (six years after Swedenborg's death in 1772). It should be noted that Swedenborg himself was never prosecuted, for many (including the queen) believed his powers to be genuine, or feared that prosecuting the elderly assessor could backfire badly in public opinion.[228] Instead, the trial sought to assess the heterodoxy of his religious doctrines, and judge his followers in Sweden who disseminated them.[229] The case was eventually dismissed without verdict by the new king Gustav III, and remained the last major heresy

[224] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 692.
[225] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 689.
[226] Lamm, *Development*, p. 301.
[227] See for instance Sigstedt, *Epic*, pp. 387-409; R. Sundelin, *Swedenborgianismens Historia I Sverige under förra århundradet* (Uppsala, 1886) pp. 58-115.
[228] Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 713-4.
[229] Acton, *Letters* II, pp. 713-4.

trial in Swedish ecclesiastical history, until religious freedom was gradually enforced in the country with the Tolerance Acts of 1781, 1782 and 1860.[230]

In the months of 1768 preceding the publication of *De Amore Conjugiali*, the efforts of Swedenborg's followers to promote his doctrines in the vernacular had ignited fears of popular spread, which more broadly sparked wider debates related to freedom of religious thought in the country. Former acquaintances dean Olof Ekebom and the bishop of Gothenburg Eric Lampberg, to whom Swedenborg had sent copies of his writings, decided to make a personal example out of the dissenting Beyer and Rosén in order to reaffirm the supremacy of Swedish Lutheran orthodoxy.[231] During the consistory of the Cathedral chapter of Gothenburg in March 1769, Ekebom and Lampberg formulated vehement attacks against Swedenborg's doctrines, accusing them of (non-exhaustively) denying any literal sense to scripture, of Socinianism, anti-solafideanism, and anti-Trinitarianism.[232]

A strong rebuttal ensued from Swedenborg's followers, with Beyer pointing that Ekebom attacked Swedenborg's doctrines while simultaneously claiming he was 'not acquainted with them'. Most of the heresy accusations during the trial were linked to personal rivalries. Rosén's co-editor Johan Gothenius, who had helped publish Beyer's provocative *Nya Prediko-försök* sermons inspired by Swedenborg, further denounced the hidden political motives behind the attacks, accusing Ekebom's right-hand man in the trial, Swedish dean Lorenz Kullin, to be vying for Beyer's stipend from the Gothenburg Cathedral chapter.[233] Rosén pointed that a thorough and fair examination of

[230] Still, in 1818, a Swedenborgian believer, Johan Tybeck, was put on trial and lost his job as a result. See H. Lenhammar, *Swedenborgaren Tybeck – den avsatte prästen* (Skelleftea, 2011). On verdict, see Acton *Letters* II, p. 734.
[231]Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 660-1.
[232] Acton *Letters* II, pp. 661-5.
[233] Sigsted, *Epic*, p. 391. See also Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 660.

Swedenborg's doctrines should be conducted, while Beyer unsuccessfully sought to seek arbitration from the king himself.

Swedenborg himself had been conscious that his followers might need protection and had personally presented copies of his works to his ally Samuel Gustaf Queckfeldt, president of the court in Gothenburg, during the period which Beyer and Rosén were charged with teaching his doctrines.[234] Nevertheless, when he learned about Ekebom's attacks in Amsterdam, he became furious. Denying all of Ekebom's accusations, he threatened the latter with a defamation suit.[235] More broadly, Swedenborg contested the claims made by the Swedish House of Clergy to exclusive authority in matters theological, arguing instead that any final verdict belonged to the combined four houses of the *Riksdag*.[236] He also later objected that attacks against his *De Amore Conjugiali* were null and void, as the work was not a theological book, but a 'treatise of morals' ineligible to be tried for heresy.[237] However, the technical grounds on which Swedenborg sought to defend himself were not upheld, and his doctrines were set to be examined before the House of the Clergy during the *Riskdag* of 1768-1769.

This was also crucial year in Swedish parliamentary history, as the *Riksdag* was exceptionally moved at considerable cost to the small town of Norrköping, in the (vain) hope that distance from the capital would allow the Cap government to retain power against the recovering Hat party.[238] Although the Hats were again becoming a dominant political force, many aristocrats were struggling financially and registered important losses that year, Swedenborg included.[239] The bankruptcy of the Gyllenborg-Stierncrona family, to whom he had lent large amounts of money, coincided abroad with a major

[234] Ryder IV, p. 324.
[235] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 665.
[236] Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 710-1.
[237] Tafel, *Documents*, II, p. 306.
[238] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 393.
[239] Lindh, *Ekonomi* (1929), p. 42.

financial crisis triggered by the 'Great East Indian crash' of 1769, in a domestic context of rampant inflation.[240]

Within this political and economic turmoil, the trial of Swedenborgianism became part of a wider political struggle between the Caps and Hats. While influential Hat members such as von Höpken sought to protect Swedenborg, the Gothenburg consistory members who had attacked his doctrines all belonged to the Cap party. The trial became a means for the Caps to attack the Hats, while the king's heir Gustav pushed the Caps to advance his own agenda for cross-party constitutional reforms that would bring more power to the crown. The Hats' refusal to make any concessions to the prince planted the seeds for Gustav III's successful absolutist coup in 1772. Yet, as the Hats then shot down Gustav's plans and retook power back from the Caps, the perceived influence of the elderly prophet over Hats policies was satirised in a short pamphlet by Henric Lemström, *An Address to the Cap Party from the Kingdom of the Dead, by Count Gustaf Bonde* [1682-1764] *held per influxum during the Author's visit in mundo Swedenborgiano, which the honourable Count requested should be included in the Parliament Speeches under the name of Advice to the Cap Party* (1769) (see Figure 23).[241] Apart from its satirical title, no further references to Swedenborg were made in the work, which shows how Swedenborgianism had become instrumentalised within a broader political controversy.

[240] *SBL*, 'Fredrik Gyllenborg'. See also Lindh, *Ekonomi* (1929), p. 42, and N. Robins, *The Corporation That Changed the World* (Hyderabad, 2012) pp. 84-100.
[241] *Academy Documents*, vol. 8, §1171, 'Jocular Reference to Swedenborg by Gustaf Bonde'.

FIGURE 23 : The count Gustaf Bonde (1682-1764) a former Hat privy council member and follower of Swedenborg, satirized as giving political advice from the spirit world to the Cap party during the heresy trial of Swedenborgianism (1769). Wikimedia Commons.

c) 'Lord what should I do?' Silencing the prophet and his followers

The attacks from Ekebom and Lampberg sparked further debates in the House of Clergy about the unwanted attention they brought to Swedenborg's doctrines. Many believed that the last thing to contain Swedenborgianism was to give it a tribune in a much-publicised heresy trial.[242] Swedenborg, it was argued, had secured little to no religious following abroad, and most of the learned in Europe who endorsed his ideas had done so out of fascination for his reputation and extraordinary powers. As a result, it was

[242] Among those were the Private council members Hermansson and Ekeblad. See Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 712-3 and 705.

expected that the elderly seer's following in Sweden would naturally wane after his death. Thus, the only adequate way for the Swedish Lutheran Church to deal with his religious ideas was to ignore them. One notable advocate of this position was Swedenborg's own nephew-in-law, bishop Peter Filenius of Linköping (1704-1780) who came out denouncing his uncle's doctrines as 'so unreasonable' that the only reason they had not been refuted for the past twenty years was that it had always been expected that 'they would fall of themselves'. Filenius, who was also the presiding officer of the House of Clergy (*Prästeståndet*) in the *Riksdag*, turned out to be very hostile to Swedenborg's theological writings, and ordered all copies of his uncle's *De Amore Conjugiali* to be confiscated and withheld in Norrköping for further examination.[243]

Filenius's opposition took Swedenborg by surprise, and the latter felt deeply betrayed by his nephew, whom he compared to 'Judas Iscariot' for having kissed him goodbye at their last encounter. Filenius, in turn 'deeply regretted' how Swedenborg's 'distinguished' learning seemed to have been 'possessed' for years in his 'advanced age' by a 'perverse imagination'.[244] This kept the elderly assessor in a state of 'second childhood' where he not only 'rejected contradiction' and 'enlightenment', but actually spread 'untruthful visions and dreams' akin to an 'abominable infection'.[245] Despite focusing on madness in his attacks, Filenius's objections remained, unsurprisingly, primarily theological.[246] As seen in the first chapter, Swedenborg's family had long been fractured between Pietists and devout orthodox Lutherans who occupied high-ranking ecclesiastical positions, and the drift had only continued to widen as Swedenborg carved his own path towards heterodoxy. He had been the head of his family in the House of Nobles since 1735, and was represented in the *Riksdag* during his absences by his eldest

[243] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 692.
[244] Tafel, *Documents*, II, pp. 313-4.
[245] Tafel, *Documents*, II, pp. 313-4.
[246] See Tafel, *Documents*, II, pp. 314-5.

nephew Emmanuel, son of his late brother Jesper.[247] The joke was frequently made that, while the clairvoyant assessor and *caput familiae* rarely went to mass and was a vocal critic of the Swedish Church, two of his nephews, Lars Benzelstierna (1719-1800) and Filenius were Swedish Lutheran bishops.

Moreover, Filenius's attacks unleashed further pressure on Swedenborg, with fears that various plots might be mounted to silence him, either by declaring him insane or assassinating him. This raised concerns amongst his followers, and during the summer of 1769, Swedenborg's disciple Thomas Hartley offered him asylum in England should he find himself in need to escape the persecutions of his home country.[248] In his memoirs about Swedenborg, Carl Robsham, recorded how, when learning the 'cunning stratagem' in parliament which sought to 'summon him through a court of justice, be declared insane and confined into an asylum', Swedenborg reportedly fell on his knees in his garden, and prayed the Lord in tears wondering what he should do.[249] His friends and followers feared for his life and fate, as exemplified by the warnings given by the prosperous Amsterdam wine-merchant, botanist and German poet Christian Cuno (1708-1783), whom Swedenborg had befriended in Changuion's bookshop in Amsterdam in November 1768.[250] Various attacks unfolded against Swedenborg, including false claims that he had declared seeing Voltaire in the spirit world following erroneous reports about the latter's death.[251] Similarly, his followers Beyer and Rosén were accused of teaching young students heretical doctrines and were rumoured to be imminently barred from teaching, stripped of their positions and banished from the country.[252] Beyer's wife, who had just

[247] For Jesper's son in the *Riksdag*, see Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 467.
[248] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 384.
[249] Robsahm, *Memoirs*, xiii.
[250] On their meeting, see Acton, *Cuno's Memoirs*, p. 7.
[251] Acton, *Cuno's Memoirs*, pp. 29-31. See also Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 366.
[252] Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 705-7.

died in childbirth, had been pressured on her deathbed by Ekebom to abjure 'the wretched doctrine of Swedenborgianism'.[253]

Meanwhile, Swedenborg had resorted to seeking arbitration from the king himself. However, the initial verdict of the Privy council, presided by the heir apparent Gustav, was negative.[254] Swedenborg struck back by refuting the very labelling of his doctrines as 'Swedenborgianism' claiming in a letter to Beyer that the word meant nothing more than 'the worship of the lord' and 'True Christianity'.[255] Forbidding 'Swedenborgianism' he argued, would mean 'forbidding [anyone] from speaking about Christ and his care for human beings'.[256] Such an interdiction would inexorably lead to 'a decline of Christianity in Sweden, a lapse into Socinianism and finally into heathendom'. [257] Nevertheless, these claims contradicted his earlier statements on the character of the New Jerusalem as a separate religion. When pressed further to clarify whether he was seeking to establish a splinter sect, Swedenborg had declared in his short doctrinal summary *Summaria Expositio Doctrinae Novae Ecclesiae* (*Brief exposition of the Doctrine of the New Church*, Amsterdam, 1769) that 'the Faith of the New Church cannot possibly coexist with the Faith of the former Church'.[258] Swedenborg remained unrepentant about such an incompatibility until his death, claiming as late as 1771 that not only did the New Jerusalem belong to a distinct dispensation, but it would become the *coronis* ('crown') of the former Christian religion 'because it will worship one visible God, in whom is the invisible God, as the soul is in the body'.[259]

Nevertheless, Swedenborg continued to publicly claim that his doctrines were orthodox in a letter to the king Adolph Frederick on 25 May 1770 in which he presented himself,

[253] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 690.
[254] Acton, *Letter*s, II, p. 711.
[255] See Acton, *Letters*, II, p.714. For 'True christianity', see p. 709.
[256] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 714
[257] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 715.
[258] SE, xii, §102-4.
[259] VR, §787. On *coronis*, see CO.

Beyer and Rosen as 'martyrs' from the 'cruel persecutions' of Ekebom and Lampberg.[260] In the end, the matter fell within the hands of the Uppsala Consistory and the Chancellor of Justice Johan Rosir. Both recommended to the king, following a unanimous verdict from the eleven privy council members, that Beyer and Rosén be barred from teaching yet given a chance to retract, while Swedenborg's doctrines were judged overall contradictory to the teachings of the Swedish Lutheran Church.[261]

Swedenborg swiftly appealed to the king, expressing his indignation and incredulity that his revelations be doubted, having previously demonstrated the veracity of his powers to the royal couple and various privy council members, and spread his writings 'before the whole of Christendom' without any prosecution for heresy.[262] However, Swedenborg's appeal was stalled, while the condemnations against Rosén and Beyer remained, with Beyer losing his job to Kullin.[263] The chancellor of justice, with the approval of the privy council, decided to leave all further action to the 'pleasure of the king' while the consistories refrained from addressing the matter further to avoid granting Swedenborg any more unwelcome publicity.[264] Swedenborg intended to settle the matter once and for all by bringing his appeal before the four Houses during the next *Riksdag* of 1771.[265] However, his failing health and commitment to publish his last work in Amsterdam ultimately prevented him from doing so.[266]

[260] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 723. On martyrs, see p. 726.
[261] Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 719-20.
[262] Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 723-4.
[263] Acton, *Letters* II, p. 720.
[264] Acton, *Letters* II, pp. 726-8.
[265] Acton, *Letters* II, p. 735. On the *Riksdag* constitution allowing this, see p. 728.
[266] Acton, *Letters* II, p. 728.

2) Last soul-body developments: on Trinity, Cartesianism and spiritual heredity

a) Soul-body and the Trinity

Swedenborg's last treatise devoted to the soul-body relationship suggests more than a mere resurgence of a former research project. By contrast to when he had redrafted and published his method for the determination of longitude in 1766 after having lost interest for it during decades, we have seen how his interest in soul-body never waned, and indeed continued to be featured, extended and repurposed even across his exegetical works. The last five years of his life were spent cementing his legacy and defending his followers, while addressing attacks against his religious doctrines. It is within this context that he produced his last soul-body writings, which more broadly highlight how soul-body allowed to situate oneself within the contemporary philosophical and confessional landscape. Although the soul-body question was not always discussed as a primarily theological problem, the three dominant models (Aristotelian, Cartesian, and Leibnizian) were all associated with various confessional standpoints, while the negation of the soul's immortality (not to say of its existence) was gaining tract as a position associated with Enlightenment deism and atheism.[267] More broadly, this highlights the close links during the early modern period between the soul-body problem, divine incarnation and the nature of the Trinity. In Swedenborg's case, reaffirming his views on the soul-body problem became an opportunity to show how his theology and memorabilia answered one of the most contended topics of the time. However, it also allowed him to argue for his piety and the orthodoxy of his doctrines while challenging interpretations of the Trinity which he claimed, too often 'made God three'.[268]

[267] Pfeffer, *Paganism*, p. 563. On soul-body and atheism, see Hartley, *Theosophic Lucubration*, iv.
[268] On three Gods, see Bergquist, *Secret*, p. 423.

An example of the latter can be seen in a defence of his unitarian take on the doctrine of the Trinity, a topic which tied into wider discussions about the dual nature, divine and corporeal, of Christ.[269] Soul-body debates had stirred several controversies over the doctrine of the Trinity in the seventeenth century, such as the famous dispute between the divines Robert South and William Sherlock, which had influenced Locke's own account about personal identity.[270] Like South's fierce attacks against 'Tritheism', Swedenborg defended his unitarian stance on the divine incarnation by stressing the unitary interdependence of the soul and body: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit he claimed, were the three 'essentials' of a 'single' God in the same way that the soul, body and their mutual intercourse constitute the three essentials of any individual.[271] Rather than denying the Trinity altogether, Swedenborg sought to radically challenge it, based on his soul-body research. Soul-body, he argued, ideally illuminated the triune meaning of the Athanasian creed, a creed 'accepted through the Christian world as the doctrine concerning God'. [272] 'All the details of the Athanasian Creed are in agreement with the truth' he wrote, provided that 'instead of three persons, one person whom is a Trinity is acknowledged'.[273] His interest in Athanasius harked back to his *De Athanasii Symbolo* manuscript from 1759, and he would claim until the end of his life that 'the Divine and the Human are united in the Lord like the soul and the body'.[274]

Discussions of soul-body in relation to the doctrine of the Trinity can also be seen in his unpublished memorabilia *Colloquia cum Calvino* (*Conversation with Calvin*, 1769), which staged his alleged conversations with the late Protestant reformer John Calvin (1509-1564). In this manuscript, Swedenborg portrayed himself asserting against Calvin

[269] For Swedenborg's detailing of his late view of the Trinity, see Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 672-3.
[270] W. Uzgalis, 'John Locke', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Edward N. Zalta (ed.) (Spring 2020).
[271] VR, §166. On Tritheism, see R. South, *Tritheism charged upon Dr. Sherlock's new notion of the Trinity etc.* (London, 1695).
[272] VR, §98:1.
[273] AE, §1103:3.
[274] AT, §30:5. See also VR, §98:1, §107:1 and §154:6.

that Christ was One person 'as soul and flesh were one man, according to the words of the Creed!' while the spirit of the late reformer of Geneva was convinced that 'Christ was two', or 'One, if hypostatic union [viz. union of the human and divine nature of Christ] made one'.[275] Swedenborg saw himself as a better defender of the Trinity than Calvin, whom he claimed held secret Arian views and 'had at length thought Christ was Joseph's son, but had not dared to write it'.[276] More broadly, Swedenborg's smearing of Calvin was part of a series of attacks made against the Reformed faith in the context of his trial. After the prosecutions began, Swedenborg doubled-down on his attacks and drew criticism even from his followers, as he declared in his *Summaria Expositio* that it would be easier for Roman Catholics to be admitted to heaven than the Reformed.[277]

b) Cartesianism corrected: mature soul-body views in Swedenborg's *De Commercio et Animae Corporis* (1769)

In April 1769, as the heresy trial unfolded, Swedenborg travelled to Amsterdam, then Paris, before returning to Gothenburg in September-October 1769. During this period, he composed and published *De Commercio Animae et Corporis* (*The interaction between soul and body*, London, 1769) a response to a non-extant letter from Kant, asking him to clarify his stance on the interaction between soul and body.[278] Swedenborg initially wished to publish his new work in Paris, where he was confident that his pro-Cartesian stance on the problem would be well-received. Although he had not returned to the French capital since his anatomical studies in the late 1730s, Swedenborg had made new allies in Paris, such as the Swedish ambassador Philip Creutz.[279] Nevertheless, much to Swedenborg's disappointment, the former French ambassador in Stockholm (1763-1766) Louis Auguste le Tonnelier de Breteuil did not authorise any first printings of

[275] CV, §2:4-6.
[276] CV, §2:8
[277] SE, §105. For criticism, see Acton, *Letters*, II, pp. 697-8.
[278] John Elliott, *De Commercio et Animae Corporis* (London, 2012), xii.
[279] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 695.

Swedenborg's new doctrinal works. This prompted the elderly seer to release *De Commercio* in London around July-August 1769 while he was still in France. Swedenborg had not published in London since the death of his former publisher John Lewis senior ten years ago, and he tasked the latter's son, John Lewis Junior, with selling his new work, along with five of his 1763 doctrinal works from Amsterdam.[280]

De Commercio was to be circulated within learned circles and with close allies, such as the ageing former prime minister von Höpken.[281] Beyer finished a Swedish translation of it in December 1769, which was subsequently banned in Sweden. Much like its doctrinal counterpart *Summaria Expositio*, *De Commercio* summarised his theological doctrines with an emphasis on the soul-body problem. Such views were celebrated by his follower Thomas Hartley, who translated the book in English under the grand title *A Theosophic Lucubration on the Nature of Influx* (1770). In it, Hartley also compared Swedenborg to one of the prophets announced in the book of Amos.[282] *De Commercio* was his final work specifically devoted to the soul-body problem, which, by the end of the 1760s, had become a trope related to philosophical discussions about the existence of God.

Disputes about whether reason and philosophy could provide genuine knowledge about the immortality of the soul had their origins in the Renaissance and had roots within controversies rooted in the history of religion and paganism.[283] Nevertheless, although scholarship affirming the immortality of the soul had been ubiquitous during the seventeenth century, Enlightenment freethinkers' and early deists such as Charles Blount and John Toland had early on sought to undermine the soul's immortality. [284] In the 1760s, a new wave of attacks on the immortality of the soul associated with the demise of

[280] Ryder, IV, p. 15.
[281] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 697.
[282] Hartley, *Theosophic Lucubration*, xvi.
[283] Pfeffer, *Paganism*, p. 574.
[284] Pfeffer, *Paganism*, pp. 563-4.

Wolffianism was prompted by Swedenborg's claims to demonstrate the soul's existence through philosophy, revelation and spirit communication. Enlightenment scholars like Kant in his *Traume eines Geistersehers* made direct attacks on Swedenborg's system, declaring the seer's 'dreams' about the human soul to be overly reliant on blinding religious faith. To this 'false philosophy which leads to infidelity and Atheism', Thomas Hartley opposed in Behmenist terms '[Swedenborg's] divine philosophy which connects physics with true metaphysics, and is not improperly termed theosophy'. [285]

In this 'divine philosophy', Swedenborg had again outlined the three dominant systems of his time, first delineated in his notebook in the 1740s.[286] As we have seen, he had moved from his vibratory iatromechanist model in the 1710s to embrace the common view, repeated in *De Commercio*, that they were the only three 'possible lines of thought regarding the interaction of soul and body; there cannot be any fourth'.[287] In most of his anatomy on the human soul from the 1730s and 1740s, Swedenborg had applied Wolffian arguments to a predominantly Cartesian framework which still relied on the notion of *spiritus animales*. His short-lived *harmonia constabilita* from the 1740s was little more than a Leibnizian-Wolffian *harmonia praestabilita* deprived of simultaneity, and he had scrapped it quickly. However, we also have seen how in his later theology, he came back to the Cartesian model by 'correcting' it with additional degrees aligned with his afterlife metaphysics. By doing so, Swedenborg attempted to expand Descartes's model without abandoning it, and sought to move beyond its much-criticised dualism by implementing a ternary structure at all levels, from the individual body to the level of its divine macrocosmic counterpart.

[285] Hartley, *Theosophic Lucubration*, xv.
[286] CC, §1.
[287] CC, §1.

FIGURE 24 : Swedenborg's soul-mind-body structure, and its macro-correspondence in the *Homo Maximus*.

A. In relation to soul-mind-body

Individual: Soul (*anima*)	Mind (*mens, animus*)	Body (*corpus*)
Max. Homo: Heavens	World of Spirits	Hells

B. In relation to the degrees of the mind

Homo Max.: Celestial Heaven	Spiritual Heaven	Natural Heaven
Individual: Celestial Mind	Spiritual Mind	Natural Mind
Internal Mind		External Mind

In this model, the divine influx flowed into the human soul (anima) and became filtered through the mind (*mens*) before reaching the body (corpus). Swedenborg then divided the human *mens* into three degrees, which he claimed had been fractured in two parts, following the primordial Fall of Man. Like Ralph Cudworth, who saw consciousness as immaterial (and had attacked Hobbes's materialistic views on the topic), Swedenborg viewed the human *mens* as an immaterial seat of consciousness and individuality.[288] Its first and higher part, or 'internal mind' he said, was composed of two degrees, respectively conceived as 'celestial' (devoted to the reception of divine influx) and 'spiritual' (hosting the faculty of charity). The lower part or 'external mind' hosts the 'natural' degree' turned towards the physical world. Swedenborg consequently presented human sin as the result of lapse in the dynamic tension between the internal and external *mens*. By doing so, he effectively moved from a binary model (soul-body) to a ternary model (soul-mind-body), mediated by 'correspondence', understood as a doctrine about the gradual mirroring by physical matter of the purer spiritual substances which they represent in the world.

[288] On Cudworth and Hobbes, see Uzgalis, *John Locke*.

The consecration of this corrected form of Cartesianism was described in a memorabilia resembling a dialogue of the dead, in which the spirits of the three *archdidascali* ('major philosophers') Aristotle, Descartes and Leibniz met, each surrounded by two of their followers (including Wolff) to debate their doctrines.[289] After exposing each camp's arguments, the dispute was concluded by an angel drawing lots, following great distress amongst the nine present, because 'Neither our soul nor body knows what part to take'.[290] The lot, Swedenborg wrote, drew the *Influxus Spiritualis* of the Cartesian camp as the system chosen by providence.[291] Although it is unclear whether such afterlife arguments convinced any of his detractors, he nevertheless resorted to work tirelessly on the theological testament he had promised to his followers. In this final revelation, the soul-body problem would be used, one last time, to defend the theology of the New Jerusalem.

c) Soul-body, divine incarnation, and heredity (1770-1771)

On 12 April 1770, Swedenborg had claimed that 'Swedenborgianism' meant nothing more (and nothing less) than 'true Christianity'.[292] Three months later, he put this statement to practice by travelling to Amsterdam with the goal of releasing a final work titled *Vera Christiana Religio* (*True Christian Religion*, Amsterdam, 1771). The title 'True Christianity' echoed the famous *Wares Christentum* (1605-1610) of German Pietist theologian Johann Arndt (1555-1621), whose four-volume devotional treatise had been translated in many European languages and enjoyed popularity in both in Reformed and Roman Catholic circles.

Crucially for our study, *Vera Christiana Religio*, notably saw Swedenborg draw on his earlier views on epigenesis to discuss theological debates on the nature and origin of the soul, in relation to God's incarnation under human form as Christ, which scholars have

[289] CC §19.
[290] CC §19:5
[291] CC §19:6.
[292] See Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 709.

identified as the leading theme of the book.[293] In this, Swedenborg jointly mobilised epigenesis and paternal heredity to discuss the divine essence of Christ. Like William Harvey in his own time, Swedenborg asserted that the unexplained causes of generation pointed towards the direct intervention of God.[294] However, moving beyond discourses which considered God as a mere primary cause in the process, Swedenborg actively identified the action of God the Father to the procreating male genitor. He regarded as an uncontroversial idea the notion that the spiritual essence of a person originated in the paternal soul, whilst the physical elements and nourishment were provided by the maternal body.[295] When the body died, he contended, what survived was the immortal soul inherited from the father, while the body inherited from the mother only left its most subtle natural parts (*limbus*) with the soul.[296] Swedenborg argued that it was the paternal soul that remained unaltered through the different stages of life, while its states and overall perception did indeed change over time.[297]

This discourse, whose main point was to reaffirm that the soul of God and his human form Christ were one, led him to sketch a late theological theory of hereditary transmission. Although some traits were found in families through generations because of the transmission of paternal essence, Swedenborg also believed that the church or religion must influence the transmission of traits, as allegedly apparent with the Jews ('the line of Jacob and Judah') whom he argued, possessed clearly identifiable traits.[298]

Apart from those late physiological speculations on the joint principles behind divine incarnation and generation, the interaction of soul-body still served as a simile to express

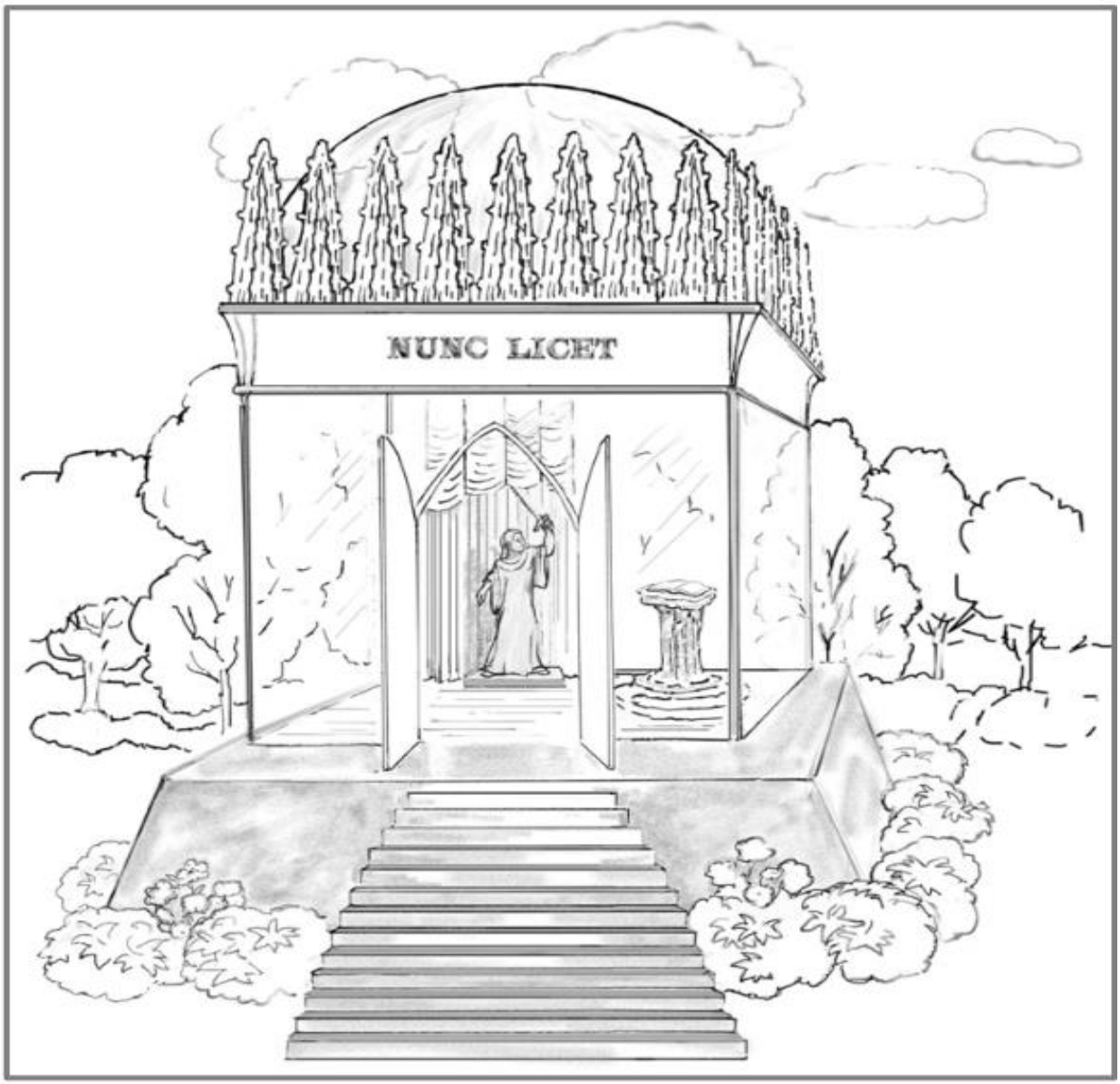
[293] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 423.
[294] X. Wang, 'By analogy to the element of the stars: the divine in Jean Fernel's and William Harvey's theories of generation', *Intellectual History Review*, 29(3) (2019), p. 382. On unexplained causes of generation, see I. Campbell, *Renaissance humanism and ethnicity before race: The Irish and the English in the seventeenth century* (Manchester, 2013), p. 165.
[295] VR, §92:1, §103, §112:5
[296] On *limbus*, see *Lexicon*, p. 251.
[297] VR, §366:1.
[298] VR, §103:2.

conceptual interdependence. The relationship between soul and body was repeatedly described as a 'reciprocal union' (§99, §154:6, §371:7) illustrated at all levels by physiological relations within the body, such as heart with lungs so central to the grand body of God (§583:1) or interdependent pairs of organs: two eyes, two nostrils, two ears and the two cerebral hemispheres. This also led him to reaffirm that some of those organs possess a direct link to the soul (heart), the *mens* (lungs) and crucial spiritual faculties such as the will (heart) and understanding (lungs).[299]

Apart from the points listed above, *Vera Christiana Religio* was written as a final synthesis, and as a result, presented few new developments. It summarised most of Swedenborg's previous discussions of soul-body, such as where the soul dwelt in the spiritual world (§769, §792), how it finds delight in 'the marriage of love and wisdom' (§697, §737:5), how it is the invisible God as the Father while the body is the visible God as the Son (§787). This revealed knowledge was to herald a new era for the New Jerusalem, as he announced in a memorabilia depicting a heavenly temple with crystal walls that it was 'now permitted to enter intellectually into the mysteries of the faith' (*Nunc Licet*).[300]

[299] VR, §712:1.
[300] VR, §508 :3.

FIGURE 25 : Swedenborg's *Nunc Licet* Temple, as described in *Vera Christiana Religio* (§508:1-3). Illustrated by Marguerite L. Acton. New Church Vineyard.



d) *De Mente Humana* and death (1772)

Before leaving his neighbor and follower Carl Robsahm in Sweden, Swedenborg had claimed that although he did not know whether the two would meet again, he at least knew that he would not die before *Vera Christiana Religio* was published.[301] Having released his last work in Amsterdam, he embarked in the summer of 1771 to London for his last journey. There he lodged at Mr Shearsmith in Great Bath Street, a man who had

[301] Robsahm, *Memoirs*, p. 11.

hosted him before, and who was convinced of the gifts of the strange 'Baron', describing him as a modern apostle.[302] Although the elderly seer still had many projects, by the time of the book's release he was 84 years old, and his health was declining. During the last eight months of his life, the soul-body problem remained dear to him, and he promised in a letter to publish a non-extant manuscript devoted to the human mind, *De Mente Humana*. However, the work never appeared. As he was working on an unpublished, unfinished appendix to his *Vera Christiana Religio*, Swedenborg expended his last forces to supervise translations of his writings from Thomas Hartley and William Cookworthy, a quaker and pioneer of the production of porcelain who became the first translator of *De Coelo* in English.

Around Christmas 1771, Swedenborg suffered a first stroke which made him bedridden for three weeks. During this time he felt deprived of his ability to speak with spirits, and reportedly ate nothing but water, tea and a little currant jelly.[303] He was attended by his follower and physician in London Husband Messiter, along with the Hanoverian physician Dr Hampe, a former preceptor to the Prince of Wales.[304] Although Swedenborg was greatly diminished and realised he would never plead his case before the *Riksdag*, he still maintained a commanding reputation as a well-informed seer, sought after to provide valuable political advice. In the last months of his life, he advised the Swedish consul Christopher Springer by revealing him dirty 'secrets' from spirits, related to the recently deceased Hat ex-prime minister Claes Ekeblad, whom the year before had deemed the seer's writings as 'too fantastic to warrant any further reading'.[305]

[302] Sigstedt, *Epic*, pp. 426-7.
[303] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 429.
[304] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 431.
[305] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 713.

Swedenborg's claims were indeed becoming bolder, as he declared to have received the visit at his London lodgings all of the spirits of the apostles, including Peter.[306] In January 1772, he received an inquiry from Swedish privy councillor Rudenskjöld to obtain information about deceased people in the spirit world, to which he replied that he would not because 'it is too small a matter to disturb the Lord Christ himself about it'.[307] Despite his political hindsight, Swedenborg neither predicted nor lived to see the absolutist coup of the newly-crowned king Gustav III, in August 1772. On 27 March 1772, two days before his death, Swedenborg came close to receive the last sacraments from one his greatest enemies, the pastor of the Swedish Church in London Aaron Mathesius. Swedenborg refused, still resenting Mathesius's accusations that he was mad.[308] Instead, he received the last sacraments from Arvid Ferelius, the second pastor of the London Swedish church, who offered him one last chance to abjure any part of the claims 'that had brought him fame in the world', and which 'many thought he had made only to make a name for himself'. To this, Swedenborg replied 'When you enter eternity you will see everything, and then you and I shall have much to talk about'.[309] He died peacefully in Clerkenwell, London, on the 29 March 1772 at five o'clock, having reportedly predicted the exact day of his death about three weeks earlier.[310] He was apparently relieved and happy for his soul to be leaving his aged and sinful body.[311]

[306] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 427.
[307] Acton, *Letters*, II, p. 759.
[308] Tafel, *Documents* II, p. 606.
[309] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 432.
[310] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 431.
[311] Sigstedt, *Epic*, p. 431. For 'sinful body', see p. 433.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have discussed Swedenborg's lifelong interest and commitment to the topic of the interaction of soul and body and have described the many facets taken by this quest across his careers and research programmes. Doing so has led me to revise a number of scholarly understandings about who Swedenborg thought he was, what he thought he was doing, and why this topic mattered to him. I have shown why a detailed study of Swedenborg's lifelong engagement with soul-body was long overdue. In contrast to the long held-view, I have demonstrated that his famous doctrine of 'correspondences' was never the chief pursuit of his research, but rather a mere side project born from his lifelong engagement with soul-body interaction. The dominance of the notion of 'correspondences' in the historiography of Swedenborg's life and works resulted from a later combination of nineteenth century literature, devotional Swedenborgianism and various currents within twentieth-century Swedish historiography. Indeed, there was nothing particularly noteworthy about Swedenborg's use of the term 'correspondences'; in his own time, no one found his concept remarkable, and the term *correspondentia* was frequently used by other scholars, especially to discuss the interaction between soul and body.

More broadly, I have argued that Swedenborg's own self was itself the object of his own study, and he saw himself as a refraction of the *Homo Maximus* he described in his mature theology. His body was the basis for his knowledge of the grand body of God, a model which came to sum up a whole mature theological cosmology based on his previous soul-body research. As seen in the fifth chapter, Swedenborg's anthropomorphic form of the whole spiritual universe represented an original twist on a still widespread set of ideas of Man seen as microcosm.

However, Swedenborg was not only an abridged version of the *Homo Maximus* he described: he was also a *Maximus Sueco*: with Linnaeus, he was the most famous Swede in Europe during the second half of the eighteenth century. But even before this considerable fame, Swedenborg was far from an isolated figure on the eighteenth-century intellectual scene. A lifelong Cartesian influenced by Wolff, ghosted by Leibniz, attacked by Kant, and disappointed by Newton, he spent more than twenty years abroad and corresponded over the course of his long life with an impressive range of Enlightenment figures, including non-extant exchanges with major philosophers such as Wolff, Kant, Rousseau and Voltaire.

As we have seen, Swedenborg's interest in soul-body was early on linked to the nature of physical matter, the mystery of divine incarnation, the project of restoring prelapsarian faculties, and the possibility of non-verbal communication. The son of a well-known Pietist bishop who himself routinely engaged in discussions with angels, Swedenborg was a pious, fiercely independent, and devout man, whose stutter made him avoid public speaking, talk slowly, and write a great deal. A prolific literary man and graphomaniac, he was a published Carolinian neo-Latin poet, a lover of music, and a passionate reader of travelogues, English literature, Ovid and the classics; a man of letters who was believed to be (and who believed himself to be) descended from one of the greatest Swedish poets.

A lifelong bachelor who celebrated the sacramental nature of sex when conjoined with true love, Swedenborg had a vivid and sensual imagination which led him to poetically eroticise the pursuit of his soul-body work under the guise of elusive muses who longed to be conquered. A courteous *cavaliere* and socialite, cautious with women and fond of stinging aphorisms, he was described by acquaintances as 'the very reverse of eccentric and whimsical' in public, yet also ready to silence by wit any impertinent trying to make sport of him. Swedenborg's intellectual career (1718-1772) coincided exactly with the so-

called Swedish Age of Liberty (1719-1772) which as a result, makes this new biography a new history of the period. Swedenborg had been part of cohort of two hundred families who had received ennoblement at the very beginning of the Age of Liberty, a period during which the Swedish House of Nobles ruled supreme over the country for fifty years. I have shown in the first and second chapters how during this time, he became a travelling parliamentarian with vested financial and political interests, a wealthy intellectual and well-connected bachelor with extended banking and publishing networks abroad, no stranger to the controversy and provocation that served to spread his ideas. A moderate member of the Hat party, he sometimes sided against his allies but consistently supported parliamentary rule as a way to temper the excesses of royal absolutism.

As seen in the fifth chapter, in the last ten years of his life he became a political seer who whispered in the ears of generals, prime ministers, dukes, kings and queens. By virtue of his success in his mission, he set a new standard of influence at the highest level of the State which the next generations of Swedish fortune-tellers would long hope to emulate. Although numerous men and women were fascinated by the elderly Swede's alleged extraordinary gifts and his sensational, ambiguous memorabilia, just as many had trouble swallowing his theological ideas, with most of his closest followers, friends and translators believing in his powers but rejecting parts of his doctrines. The fact that he was never personally prosecuted for heresy either in Sweden or anywhere else cannot be explained away by a supposed desire to avoid giving unwelcome publicity to his heterodox doctrines, nor from consideration for his advanced age or previous career achievements. As shown in in the fifth chapter, many powerful individuals (including the Swedish royal couple) believed in his powers, and he long benefitted from the protection of patrons at the highest level. Some of his religious followers however, endured a very different fate, and I have challenged the long-standing devotional narrative portraying him as a passive prophet who was not a religious nor a social reformer. In contrast, I have

shown how he actively cultivated networks of followers in positions of influence: bishops, judges, bankers, teachers, polemicists, merchants, aristocrats, political leaders -- and he tried to protect his religious followers when they were threatened. Despite his difficulties in accepting criticism, he still listened to their doctrinal objections, answered as much as he could their queries about various deceased figures in the afterlife, and sometimes wrote public doctrinal clarifications following their advice.

Swedenborg knew that the soul-body problem could allow to express political statements about the natural suitable state of ruling for the country seen as one body-politic. Like Newton, whose position on the subject he knew well, he wrote that the soul governed the body 'like the king governs the provinces of his kingdom', and he personally presented his soul-body works to the new crown-prince. Of course, such views had Classical antecedents and were pervasive across Europe, but Swedenborg used a particular form of the concept for specific circumstances, making use of them at a at a time where Sweden was one of the only parliament-ruled constitutional monarchies in Europe. Just as his soul-body views had a political subtext, Swedenborg's religious cosmology was also a political theology. As an active prophet for the post-Christian church of the New Jerusalem, he used his extraordinary gifts (and political hindsight) to exert influence on powerful individuals, in the hope of facilitating the spread of his ideas. When asked to provide information about individuals he did not know, he would sometimes double-down on the extent of his powers, such as when he claimed that he could indeed ask 'the Lord himself about it', but 'would not' because the matter was simply 'not important enough'. All of those who betrayed him or the motherland, his former collaborators, family members or political rivals, he depicted as trapped in personal hells of their own making, now appearing under the true shapes of the monsters they really were.

Swedenborg claimed that accusations of madness against him were always personally or politically motivated, spread by disgruntled Moravians after he had exposed their

fallacies in his own writings. An opportunist evangeliser of great ingenuity, resources and energy, he set out to spread his doctrines on a global scale and maintained lifelong ties with transatlantic missionary organizations. In contrast with Benzelius and Leibniz, Swedenborg dismissed the authenticity and authority of the Kabbalah, both despising and hoping to be the one to convert the Jews. Unlike Linnaeus, Kant or Buffon, he claimed that Sub-Saharan Africans were the spiritually highest of all people, a view he published in the hope of bringing them to his doctrines. Influenced by Wolff, Marco Polo and sacred philology, he believed that the true origins of Christianity lay in *Magna Tartaria* (Eurasia) where a primordial, pre-biblical revelation encoded in the holiest parts of the Word was still preserved. His new revelation, he hoped, would one day spread from the Americas to Europe, and from Africa to Asia. His global ambitions intersected with fears of global conflicts: having in vain opposed a new war against Russia and feared the end of Sweden altogether during the Great Northern War, Swedenborg eventually placed the end times in the spiritual world in 1757, the year his country entered the global Seven Years War.

Back from his Grand Tour, he had served in times of war as an engineer who pushed for unheard technoscientific development in a crumbling Swedish Empire. Little did he know that he was about to enter one of the most difficult periods of his life. For his services to the last Swedish warrior-king, he was granted an unpaid extraordinary assessorship at the Bureau of Mines in 1718, an obsolete position which no one had received in more than thirty years. As the Great Northern War reached its twilight, he fell out of favour and cunningly withdrew from his role, narrowly escaping execution. Soon after the king's death during the campaign of Norway, his superiors at the bureau denied him voting rights and advancement for ten years, a retribution for having bypassed the Board of Mines for his own career advancement. Based on private lessons with Varignon in Paris, his treatise of algebra (the first ever published in Swedish) was meant to introduce

infinitesimal calculus in Sweden, but a clumsy editor forgot to include the last three chapters. At that point, Swedenborg considered leaving Sweden for good. The soon-to-be prophet, it seems, had no honor in his home country.

In the shadow of his senior collaborator Christopher Polhem, who had taken most of the credit, Swedenborg had acted as the editor and main contributor to Sweden's first scientific journal, in which he published his very first soul-body research in 1718. His interest in the soul-body relationship had begun early in his Grand Tour (1710-1715) with a lost method of mind-reading, based on the muscular manifestations of emotions on the face. As we have seen, the project would later be of interest to physiognomists such as Lavater, although Swedenborg himself denied that he ever dabbled in 'physiognomy', a term for him that was synonymous of divination, superstition and jugglery. Inspired by Polhem, Bernoulli and Borelli, Swedenborg had become a vibratory iatromechanist. Influenced by the tradition of sympathetic-harmonic physics, he defended the empirical existence of thought-transference and communication at a distance and tried to explain their underlying laws. The rejection of his research programme by both the Swedish Literary Guild and the *Collegium Medicum* in the early 1720s came as a blow which prompted him to refocus on his career as a mining expert, a job he performed for twelve years.

As seen in the first chapter, it was not without struggles that Swedenborg gradually gained recognition as one of Europe's leading metallurgists. He pragmatically specialised in iron and copper, his home-country's most important commodities, and by so doing he eventually won his status back in the bureau and improved his precarious financial situation, both of which he managed while his Hat allies rose to political prominence. During this period, he published very little, releasing almost nothing for seven years. However, his manuscripts reveal that in private, he continued to pursue his studies on the soul/body question. After a series of milestone publications in metallurgy which led in

1734 to a reassessment of Cartesian physics, Swedenborg applied continually for leaves of absence to supposedly pursue his celebrated metallurgical works. Yet as soon as these leaves were granted and once he had left Sweden, he spent all his time working tirelessly on anatomy and his soul-body research. This quest, he believed, would one day provide much-needed evidence for the presence of God and the salvation of mankind through charity, in an increasingly dark and impious world.

In the first and second chapters I have analysed new evidence relating to his deep interest in prelapsarian knowledge and the restoration of Adamic soul-body coordination. I have argued, in line with Peter Harrison, that such interests place him within a wider Augustinian revival of ideas on the Fall among eighteenth century Protestants. An avid reader of Augustine, whom he held in high esteem, Swedenborg defended an intermediary position on Adamic corporeity: rather than corrupting the body itself, he believed it was the hereditary transmission of original sin which disturbed the divine influx within humans that was responsible for coordinating the soul and the body. Adam's body, he claimed, was not substantially different from our own mortal body. However, the condition of the soul-body nexus had changed since the Fall, and any research able to understand it might free mankind from carnal mortality, degeneration, ignorance, lying, or diseases. I have argued that in pursuit of this aim, Swedenborg's naturalist understanding of Adamic soul-body interaction was jointly informed by his research in cerebral anatomy, his growing Pietist focus on the body, and his early iatromechanical ideas. I have also shown how his research was shaped by his scepticism towards Hermeticism and alchemy, although he sought to make his published research appealing to his peers and colleagues involved in such perspectives. Above all, Swedenborg wanted to be read, discussed and recognised.

As I pointed out in the first and second chapters, after his initial ambition to unlock the prelapsarian powers of the soul through a new algebra-based computational science,

Swedenborg toned down his objectives in his *Oeconomia*. This revision occurred in part because of his considerable struggles in developing the promised science, but it also coincided with a drastic U-turn in his belief in miracles, following a sojourn to Rome. Swedenborg had a complex relationship with Roman Catholicism. For instance, he denounced Catholic purgatory (so close to his own intermediary *Mundo Spirituali*) as a 'Babylonish invention', yet he also claimed that Roman Catholics would be admitted to heaven 'sooner than the Reformed'. Swedenborg abhorred monastic orders, the pope, and the cult of saints; he rarely went to mass and viewed confession as the coercion tool of inquisitive men, persuaded they could absolve sins in the place of God. An anti-solafidean Lutheran with strong pietist leanings, Swedenborg defended a theology of works, rejected vicarious atonement and criticised the Trinity as 'Three Gods' arguing until the end of his life that the 'Divine and the Human are united in the Lord, like the soul and the body'. The Roman Catholic church, he observed, relied on deceptive miracle tales to 'compel' and 'extort believers' while genuine miracles in this Age were now hidden and very few, in order to allow for the emergence of a rational faith from within.

One of those hidden and rare modern miracles, he soon claimed, was his own spiritual transformation. The third chapter has shown how he went through a gradual process of divine opening of his senses during the mid-1740s, while writing his *De Fibra* manuscript on oneirology, soul-body interaction during sleep, and proto-psychiatry. This process, he said, transformed him into a unique dual citizen of the spiritual and natural worlds, an exegete guided by angels ideally placed to reveal the lost *sensus internus* of the Word and relay the spiritual advent of the millenarian New Jerusalem.

As I showed in the third and fourth chapters, from the mid-1740s Swedenborg believed that he could now hold conversations with spirits, and feel and interpret their actions in and outside of his body. He recorded having acquired various extraordinary gifts, such as being able to see things located hundreds of miles away, like the Saami *noaidis* described

in his anatomical manuscripts. Only fools claimed this had anything to do with magic: there was an anatomical basis behind it all, which only predestination, practice and a subsequent gift from God could unlock. Swedenborg believed he had obtained new powers because his body predisposed him to it. His own father regularly spoke with angels. Since his childhood Swedenborg instinctively tended to hold his breath while praying and thinking. This now resulted in an ability to hold his breath for hours, only breathing via the 'internal', biblical breath of life. His eyes, his landlady claimed, sometimes burned from a fiery (and terrifying) glow in the dark, while he was 'in the spirit'. His eyesight, he claimed, had improved, and at the age of fifty-six, he now felt 'handsome like an angel'. He would regularly fall into semi-conscious ecstasies which filled him with great joy and clarified his mind. But his body was also a battleground for the actions of innumerable nefarious spirits, who tried to lead him astray. All of his bodily pains, his kidney-stones, an itchy anus, or tooth pains were caused by the spirits of his deceased enemies. His late brother-in-law whom he despised was literally, he claimed, a pain in his ass, the kind of statement which never failed to both amuse and intrigue his interlocutors. Tooth pains he claimed, certainly did not have anything to do with his famous large consumption of heavily-sugared coffee.

This portrait of whom Swedenborg thought he was after his transformation underlines how his spiritual experiences were first formulated as ambiguous literary objects. As shown in this thesis, these phenomena did not hold a constant status in his theological writings. In the third and fourth chapters I showed how initially, many of these episodes either consisted of personified thoughts, cathartic writings, dream records or self-examinations. By a careful analysis of his manuscripts, I have identified the precise point where he restricted such episodes to conversations with deceased individuals, and how such a stance allowed him to formulate attacks with renewed strength. Nevertheless, as I argued in the fifth chapter, Swedenborg's audiences rarely subscribed to his fine-grained

distinctions, and he frequently lamented that his writings were unfairly compared to Boehme and Law, whom he had 'never read'. Contributing to historical debates about eighteenth century rationalist forms of mysticism, the thesis has shown how his extremely influential 'memorabilia' (which, he repeatedly claimed, were not 'visions') had stylistically more in common with the then-fashionable philosophical genre of the dialogues of the dead than with the visions of sixteenth and seventeenth Christian mystics. In the fourth and fifth chapters, I showed how his notebook and letters indicate his familiarity with the genre, while additional overlooked influences include his growing Pietist tendency to assign a broader spiritual meaning to physiological functions and bodily pains, but also the spiritual legitimacy of personified literary stories to teach moral truths, famously defended by Swedish theologian Andreas Rydelius, the leading Swedish source quoted by Swedenborg in his notebook.

More broadly, the thesis has displayed the variety of uses and shapes taken by the soul-body problem during the Enlightenment period. In the first half of the eighteenth century, the soul-body debate was understood (and commonly discussed) in terms of three competing theories (Aristotelian entelechism, Cartesian occasionalism, Leibnizian-Wolffian pre-established harmony), which excluded any other model. Many scholars who tried to coin a 'fourth system' ended up being dismissed as mere variations of one of the three systems. In his youth, Swedenborg had read Newton daily, but he was shocked by the perceived cultic nature of Newtonianism in England. Moreover, he had strong metaphysical ambitions, and like most Swedish scholars at the time, he remained an old-fashioned Cartesian whose soul-body views became strongly influenced by Wolff, the dominant philosopher in Sweden during the 1730s. This led him to fuse his vibratory iatromechanism with his own take on Cartesian physics, and then-popular Wolffian physico-theology. In 1740, he presented his own take on the Leibnizian monad and briefly coined his own system 'co-established harmony' (*harmonia constabilita*), a direct

response to Leibniz's 'pre-established harmony'. However, he soon abandoned the term, and in his final years he reasserted the superiority of Cartesianism, arguing that Descartes's problematic dualism could be resolved by the doctrine of 'influx' and intermediate degrees. Influx was a familar neo-Platonic concept which Swedenborg nevertheless attributed to Descartes, while his idea of intermediate degrees for the soul stemmed both from his studies in infinitesimal calculus and his extensive readings of Augustine.

As shown in the second chapter, Swedenborg crafted his own via media between Leibnizian-Wolffianism and the Cartesian corpus. As an anatomist, he saw himself as a superior theorist, with a gift for analysis of the data compiled by the greatest anatomical authorities of his time. Despite this, he did dissections and practised anatomy himself, spending considerable time and resources to retrain as an anatomist in Paris, most likely under the private supervision of Jacob Benignus Winslow and Nicolas Pourfour du Petit. As shown in the fourth chapter, Swedenborg was deeply hurt by the relative lack of success of his anatomical publications. Shortly before giving up for good on his last anatomical series, he went to lectures at the College of Physicians in London, hoping in vain to hear mention of his work or name. Having arrived back home, he noted how he resented his vanity for doing so and dismissed his methodology as 'trash'.

Nevertheless, his two most original anatomical ideas regarding anatomical evidence of the soul within the body (his *cerebellula* or mini-brains within the brain, and the intermediary 'white blood' essence) were both derived from observable phenomena. The *cerebellula* were based on small dots which turned out to be caused by the boiling of cerebral tissues when prepared for dissection. The supposedly higher and subtler 'white blood' was the visible white fluid floating above red blood decanting, a fluid we now identify as plasma. Such an empirical grounding for his two most original hypotheses distances his work from fanciful abstractions formulated outside of the realm of

anatomical observation. Because of this, Swedenborg's anatomy should be taken seriously, albeit without on the contrary indulging in exaggerated, whiggish claims that he was a pioneering discoverer either of the cerebrospinal fluid (he was not) or of the neuron (which he could not, from a pure technological standpoint, observe).

Another great influence on Swedenborg was his relative Linnaeus, who, despite being his junior by twenty years, nominated him for KVA membership. They shared an interest for anatomy (Linnaeus had married the daughter of Swedenborg's former preceptor, the famous Swedish anatomist Johan Moraeus) the Saami, animals, plants, seeds and taxonomy. Although Linnaeus was much more sceptical than his older cousin on a number of topics concerned with the supernatural, they both shared private criticisms about the dissolute morals of the political elites of their time. Both were criticised by their enemies for their controversial religious ambitions: Swedenborg was attacked as a fanatic, heretical prophet, and Linnaeus as a delusional 'second Adam'. Linnaeus's hugely successful *Systema Naturae* encouraged Swedenborg to frame his research in taxonomical terms, and to postulate the existence of a 'fourth' Kingdom in nature, alongside the mineral, vegetable and animal versions: namely the spiritual Kingdom, or the reign of the human soul ('Regnum Animale').

Overall, despite a considerable number of unpublished materials on the topic and treatments under other forms in his theological works, Swedenborg only published four anatomical titles (comprising seven volumes in total) specifically devoted to soul-body in his career (the *Tremulationer* article, *De Infinito, Oeconomia Regni Animalis I-II, Regnum Animale I-III*). Swedenborg left hundreds of manuscript pages on the topic, with the period 1740-1744 being his richest in terms of unpublished materials on the brain. Concern with the latter was not restricted to his anatomical research, but was reframed within his broader theological cosmology of the *Homo Maximus*, which meant the theme came to underline many aspects of his theology. His last dedicated publication would be

De Commercio Animae et Corporis, released in 1769 during the heresy trial against his doctrines. It is telling that, during times where the very orthodoxy of his doctrines was attacked, Swedenborg saw fit to produce a mature summary of his lifelong reflection on the interaction between soul and body, a topic which remained one of the most contended issues of his time.

More broadly, Swedenborg's considerable fame, impact, soul-body commitment and posterity call for a reassessment of our current Enlightenment scholarship. The thesis has pointed to the limits of existing categories to account for such a major and yet strangely underrated Enlightenment figure. Indeed, it is time to build a more comprehensive framework which can account for a secular narrative of his life and works, is untainted by the attacks of Kantianism, flies free from whiggish historiographical prejudice against his religious ideas, and is decoupled from enduring devotional perspectives. Indeed, few eighteenth-century figures can boast of a similar contemporary, religious following. In contemporary historiography, scholars from the Swedenborgian New Church have overall played a two-sided role. While they unwillingly contributed to insulate him and propagated narratives partly shaped by their religious commitment, their extraordinary efforts to preserving Swedenborg's writings and making them accessible to scholars and lay people alike still allow researchers to this day to navigate what remains a colossal, richly multi-faceted corpus. Indeed, this remains the largest surviving theological corpus on the afterlife written before the nineteenth century.

My thesis has also laid bare the limits of a classification of Swedenborg as a 'theosopher', a Behmenist term he never used and which was applied to him only by later followers who were engaged in religious syncretism. It made sense for them, but not for him. There is similarly no benefit to considering Swedenborg as a major figure of Western Esotericism during the eighteenth century, since the term itself is not an actor's category and Swedenborg himself recused many of the ideas now commonly associated

with such a moniker. His influence on later occultist movements and ideas, however, is both undeniable and considerable. This points to the limits of our current scholarship on the 'mystical' or 'covert' Enlightenment first analyzed in the introduction, which does not fully account for figures as trained, literary-versed and radically independent as Swedenborg. In contrast to what puzzled historians might still state, Swedenborg was certainly not an unclassifiable accident of the Enlightenment. The thesis has shown how he was very much a product of his time, who wrote for the people of his time, in order to address concerns of his time. Across six decades and from a variety of perspectives, his engagement with the soul-body question allowed him to do just that.

An extensive historical reassessment of Swedenborg's anatomical ideas, along with a study of their influence on his religious ideas was long overdue. It was about time that such ideas were also taken seriously by historians outside of Swedenborg's home-country. The great Swedenborg scholar Inge Jonsson (1928-2020) wrote a major (still untranslated) study of Swedenborg's correspondences across his whole life (*Korrespondenslära*, 1969), a work that clearly indicated the need for a study of Swedenborg's lifelong soul-body engagement. Jonsson was also wary of artificially projecting lifelong continuities on Swedenborg's rather eclectic interests, noting that 'it is the besetting sin of Swedenborg researchers to interpret earlier stages in the light of later developments and to presume logical connection and continuity where the sources reveal rather a joy in hypothesizing and a rich fantasy'.

Jonsson's warning from 1969 alluded to the studies of Swedenborgian researchers, who since Martin Lamm in 1915, had happily embraced the idea of a lifelong preparation which fared well with Swedenborg's own late (and as we have seen in the first chapter, controversial) claims that he had been prepared as a Revelator since his childhood. Today, Jonsson's call rather resonates as a welcome historiographical reminder against whiggish interpretations of Swedenborg's life. This problem is not peculiar to

Swedenborg himself, but rather concerns every biography engaged in studying a lifelong running-theme from any historical figure. Individuals remain committed to the same broad topics for years and decades, while the ideas they concoct and the approaches they adopt necessarily change over time. In the case of Swedenborg and the soul-body relationship, my account has treated the variety of fields, shapes and forms taken by what effectively remained a lifelong interest, if not a lifelong obsession, and one of the most contested topics of the time. My thesis has more widely made a case for Swedenborg to be finally reconsidered as the true Enlightenment polymath he really was, a seminal figure whose works inspired countless individuals, and who used the soul-body problem as a vessel to honor his lifelong pledge to prove the existence to of God, and his action and presence within his creation.

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III. Digital Resources

All online sources, including digital publications, were consulted between September 2018 and July 2022, and verified in July 2022.

Databases, Online Entries and Websites

Database for quotations of Swedenborg's theological works:

https://newchristianbiblestudy.org/advanced-search/

King James Bible:
https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/

Luther, *Smalcald Articles*:
http://cyclopedia.lcms.org/display.asp?t1=s&word=SINS.VENIALANDMORTAL

Alvin database with scans and transcriptions of parts of Swedenborg's KVA manuscripts:
https://www.alvin-portal.org/alvin/view.jsf?pid=alvin-person%3A1278&dswid=4256

J. M. Windt, *'Dreams and Dreaming', The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2020 Edition):
https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2020/entries/dreams-dreaming/

W. Uzgalis, 'John Locke', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2020 Edition):
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Swedish transcription of Swedenborg's Scheringson manuscript (Stockholm, 1860):
http://runeberg.org/sweddrom44/0031.html

Academy Collection of Swedenborg Documents, vol. 1-10:
https://fdocuments.in/document/academy-collection-swedenborg-documents-emanuel-swedenborg-bryn-athyn-pa-1948.html?page=1

P. Gouk, 'Cosmic Vibrations', *Terrain*, 2014:
https://doi.org/10.4000/terrain.16424

O. Hjern, 'Swedenborg in Stockholm', *Swedenborg Zentrum Berlin*, 2019:
https://www.swedenborg.de/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Pfr.-Olle-Hjern-Swedenborg-in-Stockholm.pdf

Baron Sparre Swedish Ambassador in England 1688 – 1741:
http://www.twickenham-museum.org.uk/detail.php?aid=304&cid=33&ctid=1

R. Esterson, 'Did Swedenborg study Kabbalah?', *Blogpost Swedenborg Foundation*:
https://swedenborg.com/scholars-swedenborg-kabbalah-1/

Biographical notice on publisher William Cavelier, *Newton Project*:
https://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00070

Newton's *Irenicum*, *Newton Project*:
https://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/view/texts/normalized/THEM00003

Svensk Biografisk Lexikon

Johan Moraeus	https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/Presentation.aspx?id=9487
Carl Gyllenborg	https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/Mobil/Artikel/13351
Joachim Preis	https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/mobil/artikel/34820#/sbl/Mobil/Artikel/7404
Urban Hiärne	https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/Presentation.aspx?id=13625&forceOrdinarySite=true
Johan Rosenadler	https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/mobil/artikel/34820#/sbl/Mobil/Artikel/6895
Jesper Swedberg	https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/mobil/artikel/34820
Niels Bielke	https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/mobil/artikel/34820#/sbl/Mobil/Artikel/18168
Gustaf Rålamb	https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/mobil/artikel/34820#/sbl/Mobil/Artikel/6447
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