

José Antonio Pacheco

*THE TWO FORMS OF RELIGIOSITY
IN SWEDENBORG'S DRÖMBOK¹*

DRÖMBOKEN or, as it has been translated, *The Journal of Dreams*, is a document that is fundamental for a better understanding of the life and work of Emanuel Swedenborg, for it is a reflection of the transition from his scientific stage to his theological stage. *The Journal of Dreams* contains accounts of the spiritual experiences of 1743 and 1744, which led Swedenborg to devote himself completely to his theological work. The *Drömbok* is the only book (except for some small works from his youth) that Swedenborg wrote in Swedish. It is written in an unpolished style, full of Latinisms and Gallicisms, possibly because Swedenborg never thought of publishing it. This fact, and also the candor and spontaneity with which Swedenborg recounts his experiences, makes *The Journal of Dreams* an invaluable text. The *Drömbok* remained unpublished until 1859 (more than eighty years after the death of its author). It was published by the librarian G. E. Klemming, who found the manuscript which, after various vicissitudes, had ended up in the Royal Library of Stockholm.² The book's title may be somewhat misleading. It starts out as a travel journal, then goes on to recount dream experiences, along with visions in the awakened state. The *Drömbok* is one of the highest examples of Christian spirituality and reveals the depths of its author's soul.

Our theory regarding the *Drömbok* consists in asserting that there are two spiritual experiences present in this work. One is akin to that of a shaman, whereby Swedenborg experiences instances of bilocation (being in more than one place), visions, and the like. These experiences are usually connected with breathing exercises like those of yoga. It seems that ever since he was a small boy, and throughout his entire life, Swedenborg had these kinds of experiences. Another important element of this numinous dimension consists in interiorizing anatomy and converting it into a phenomenology of the subtle body:

I seemed to pick up a key, I entered, the guards examined what kinds of keys I had: I showed them all, in case I had two, although I thought that Hesselius had the other one. I was stopped, I was being watched, a lot of people came up to me; I thought I had done nothing bad, it would have been suspicious for me to have that key. I woke up; many interpretations:

that I had picked up the key of anatomy; that the key that Hesselius had was for medicine; and also that the key of Lungs is the pulmonary artery, and consequently that of every motum corporis [movement of the body]; or spiritualiter [in a spiritual manner]. (1744, March, night of the 25th to the 26th)³

The phenomenology of the subtle body in Swedenborg is important not only to define the type of ecstatic vision to which he finds himself subjected (and which is recorded in the *Drömbok*). It is also essential for understanding how Swedenborg's thinking evolved, since the idea of *Maximus Homo*, which is characteristic of the theological stage, is implicit in the *Drömbok*, inasmuch as this document reveals the interiorization of the anatomical and physiological categories that appear in the *Regnum animale* (3 volumes, Amsterdam, 1744-1745; Swedenborg had just published the first two volumes), and their transposition into spiritual categories. Ultimately this whole series of ideas would have to be associated with the notion of the Mystical Body of Christ.

I spent the whole night dreaming. I do not remember much, it happened as though I were being instructed all night long about many subjects that I cannot recall; I was asleep almost 11 hours. This is what I have retained in my memory: it seemed to me: 1. that what is called substantialia or essentialia is what one should apply oneself to and seek. 2. There was also talk about thymus and glandula renalis, which I interpreted this way: just as the thymus removes the impure serum from the blood and the glandula renalis returns it to the blood after purifying it, the same thing also happens in us in a spiritual manner, I believe. (Night of the 11th and 12th)

We have already alluded to the importance that breathing has in Swedenborg's ecstatic experiences, which makes it similar to shamanistic and yogic awareness. But also, this fact is related (as we were saying) to Swedenborg's position as an anatomist and the interiorization process that we see initiated here. Indeed, our author had just published *Regnum animale*, where, among other things, he explains breathing as a channel of communication between spiritual substance and the body (at this time Swedenborg was greatly preoccupied by the Cartesian problem of the relationship between body and soul):

I observe that this is how things were: by means of breathing, I thought the previous day—which was represented to me by a sort of luminous spiritual

writing, which means that the will which has more to say to the understanding in breathing in [inspiratio], which is to say, when the thoughts that are flying about enter into the body; and in breathing out [expiratio], when those thoughts are expelled, so to speak. Thus, the thoughts [cogitationes] themselves have their alternations of activity [vices activitatis], just like the breathing of the lungs [pulmonum respiratio], since the breathing in [inspiratio] is dependent on the will [ad voluntatem], the breathing out [expiratio] is dependent on nature [ad naturam]; thus thoughts have their alternation in each alternation of breathing [vice respirationis]. Thus, when evil thoughts occur, one needs only to breathe in and they fall. Because of this we can also see the reason why, in a moment of intense thinking [cogitatione], the lungs are kept in equilibrium [in æquilibrio], motionless, more "ad naturam", and then the breaths taken in [inspiraciones] go more rapidly than breaths expelled [expiraciones], unless the opposite occurs. This is also like, in ecstasy [in exstasi] when one holds in one's breathing, and then the thoughts are as though they had parted; in the same way as in dreaming, where both breathing in [inspiratio] and breathing out [expiratio] are dependent on nature [ad naturam], it is what flows from above that is represented. This can also be deduced from the brain, that is, in breathing in [inspiratio] all the innermost organs [organa intima] and the brain are in expansion, and thoughts then find their origin and their course. (Night of the 12th and 13th)⁴

Finally, to finish this brief presentation of some of these experiences which reflect a shamanistic phenomenology, we are going to point to an instance of simultaneous presence in two places that Swedenborg experienced in his 1744 crisis:

Very strange things happened to me; I was seized by violent shivers—as when Christ gave me the divine grace—one after another, between 10 and 15. I was expecting to be thrown down on my face like the previous times, but this did not happen. After the last shiver, I was lifted up into the air and I felt my hands were touching someone's back, as below the chest; then he lay down and I saw the face, very gloomy.... This was happening in the course of vision, during which I was neither awake nor asleep, because all my thoughts were united; it was the inner man, separated from the exterior, who was feeling this. When I woke up, these shivers came back several times.... The grace of God manifests itself to the interior and the

external man in me, praise and glory to God alone. From all of this and other things I inferred that it meant that I was supposed to uncover truths about interior sensations [veritates de sensationibus internis]. (Night of July 1st to 2nd)⁵

The other sphere to which the *Drömbok* alludes is directly related to Christian religiosity. This involves an experience that is explained from presuppositions and views proper to a specifically Christian concern. Without any hesitation we will call this last sphere that appears to us the *Drömbok* mysticism. We believe that these two dimensions (the one we have labeled as “shamanistic” and the one that is Christian) are inseparably present in Swedenborg, although it is perfectly possible to distinguish between them. And it is necessary to differentiate them to arrive at an accurate knowledge of Swedenborg’s innermost longings. Swedenborg’s experiences that have yogic or shamanistic characteristics may be paranormal, while his experiences that stem from completely Christian motivations are mystical.⁶ Thus, there are two forms of spirituality, and again we emphasize that they usually present themselves as unified or very interrelated.

One of the issues that best define Swedenborg’s specifically Christian mysticism in the *Drömbok* (and later on in all his works) is rooted in his attention to Saint Paul’s *Letter to the Romans*. We believe that there is no need to dwell too much on the great importance that this Pauline document has for the history of Christian spirituality. The case of Swedenborg belongs wholly to this tradition that was strongly influenced by the *Letter to the Romans*. Thus, we see a reference to *Romans*, specifically to the dilemma posed by *Romans* 5:5:

Easter fell on April 6. When I went to the Holy Table, the temptation was still persisting, almost all afternoon, until six; although it was not constant, I felt anxiety as though I were damned and in hell, but the hope that the Holy Spirit gives was always present, a very strong hope, according to Saint Paul in Romans 5:5. Power has been given to the evil one to expand restlessness to our innermost being by means of various thoughts. On Easter, after Holy Communion, I felt an inner joy, although on the outside I was afflicted; the temptation came in the afternoon, in another way, but very strong, since I was sure that I had obtained the forgiveness of my sins, but at times I could not rule my fleeting thoughts to express myself with more intelligence, something that was coming from the Evil One. By permission, my prayers quieted these thoughts down, along with the word of

*God; faith was present, completely, but consolation and love seemed absent.
(Night of the 5th and 6th)⁷*

Here, in this area of deep and dramatic spirituality, what is involved is the action of the Holy Spirit to remove the anxiety produced by guilt and sin. There are other places in Swedenborg's works where references to *Romans* again come up. No less could be expected, because, for our author, the question of free will occupies a crucial place in his theological thinking. Specifically, this repeated reference to *Romans* is intended to emphasize: first, the need for the action of the Holy Spirit, and second, to bring out the importance of works in contrast to faith alone, and thus the assertion of free will. More specifically, and without any claim to exhaust the subject, *Romans* 3:28 is cited in *Apocalypsis Revelata* 417 and in a letter to Oetinger; and also in *Sapientia Angelica de Divina Providentia* 115.⁸ Likewise, in another letter to Dr. Beyer, there is another reference to Saint Paul (*Col.* 2:9) relating to Christ's humanity. All of this is clear proof of the Pauline, and therefore expressly Christian, inspiration of our author. This repeated reference to Saint Paul, prompted by the defense of free will and the value of works postulated by Swedenborg, is already present in the *Drömbok*, immersing it in its religious piety. This once again shows how this revelation of Swedenborg's inner world already contains the main themes that were to be developed later on. By way of example, we quote these words: "...in such a manner that faith without works is not true faith, and it ought to be ignored" (Night of the 21st to the 22nd).

Naturally, however, the theological motifs that point to a Christian experience on the part of the Swedish thinker are numerous in the *Drömbok*. Clearly, we have no intention of looking at all of them here. We will refer only to a few fundamental ones. The first motif that strikes us is the piety steeped in Christocentrism that goes along with Swedenborg's entire inner experience. This gives weight to our thesis of the existence of a specifically Christian mysticism in the Journal:

All day long I have had a twofold thought, which sought to destroy the spiritual element through a kind of slander, in such a way that I found the temptation extremely strong. By the grace of the Holy Spirit, I fixed my attention on a tree, I gazed at the cross of Christ and the crucifixion of Christ. While I was doing this, the other thoughts fell flat by their own weight. I kept on with the same thought so intensely that I thought of putting the Tempter on the cross and expelling him, then I immediately

felt free. After that I contained my thoughts so firmly on this matter that as soon as I let go of my thoughts and my inner vision, I fell into tempting thoughts. Praise be to God, who has given me this weapon! May God in His grace guard me, so that I may constantly hold before my eyes my crucified Savior, because I did not dare look at my Jesus as I had seen Him before, for I am an unworthy sinner, and I ought to fall on my face, and it is Jesus who gets up to look upon my face; then I saw the crucifixion of Christ. (Night of the 13th and 14th)⁹

It is true that these emotive images might reflect the influence of the Pietists of Zinzendorf, a congregation that laid great stress on the emotional aspects of Christian devotion as a reaction to Lutheran orthodoxy. But as Bergquist himself acknowledges, in the case of Swedenborg, it is a matter of figures and motifs that are proper to every Christian mystic. It is evident that the personality of Jesus Christ becomes the center of all genuinely Christian reflection and spirituality, but beyond this, in the case of the Scandinavian mystic, we are dealing with a piety moved by the emotive and bleeding traits of his inner vision (*inwertes syn*) of Christ, and not by a conceptual or abstract consideration. In other words, Swedenborg would fit into modern mysticism, with its stress on the bodily aspects, and this would bring him close to the great Spanish mysticism of the golden age (it is also clear that Swedenborg wanted to react against the coldness of official Protestantism). By way of example, we cite one more paragraph that is Christocentric in nature:

*Over a 12 hour period, I had a supernatural dream, it was good and it lasted long. When I woke up, I had the crucifixion of Jesus and His cross before my eyes. The spirit arrived so high with its heavenly and almost ecstatic life (*vita caelesti quasi exstatica*), and so to speak, I let myself rise higher and higher, such that if I had risen any higher, I would have been dissolved by the same true life of joy (*vita gaudii*). It occurred to me in spirit that I had gone too far when, in my thoughts, I had embraced Christ on the cross, then when I had kissed His feet, I went away from there, having fallen on my knees as it were, and praying for his crucifixion. I was thinking, as I was doing this, that the sins I had committed out of weakness were forgiven. The idea came to me that I could have in image form the same thing before my bodily eyes, but I discovered that this was something that was far from being just, and that it was a great sin. (Night of the 14th and 15th)*

There is no need to insist any more on the fact that the suffering humanity of Christ represents a fundamental element of Swedenborgian spirituality, a spirituality which, as it manifests itself in the *Drömbok*, we do not hesitate to consider mystical. As for the sincerity of these experiences, we believe that one more proof of this is the intense sense of drama with which their author describes them to us. Let us look at one example of this:

And so, while I was in the spirit, as I was thinking, I was looking for what I could have knowledge of through my thoughts, in order to avoid everything that was impure. But I observed the same thing as in every circumstance: what would emerge was what the thinking process draws from the backdrop of self-esteem, as happens when someone does not perceive me according to the high idea I have of myself. I would also think: if you knew what grace I have received, you would proceed in a different manner; and that was something that was based on exaggerated self-esteem. Finally I understood and I begged God to forgive me; and I desired that others could have the same grace, that it would be possible that they would have it or receive it; in such a manner that I clearly noted in myself something of that horrible apple, something that is not converted, which is the root and the original sin of Adam; yes, the other eternal root of my sin. (Night of the 7th and 8th)

We are standing before a deep experience of the ego, the ground of self-esteem (*grund af egen kerlek*), as radical opposition to divine grace (*nåd*). Thus the *Journal of Dreams* juxtaposes a series of oppositions revealed by Swedenborg's innermost conflict. Here we are faced with the most unfathomable of opposites: the ego, the eternal root of sin (*oendelig anna rot jag har til synden*), and the grace that comes from God to take the place of the human indigence that has taken root. Without a doubt, in this self-esteem taken as original sin, we should see a category that was to appear in later theological works: the *proprium* ('that which is one's own'), the fundamental obstacle that man sets up against his rescue by God, that backdrop of egotistical self-affirmation that every human being has. For this reason, on this theme too, the *Drömbok* presents itself to us as a forerunner of what Swedenborg was to develop a little later on. This means that the *Journal of Dreams* is a text that, because of its intermediate position, to a large extent turns out to be a hermeneutical key to understanding both the first stage and the second stage of Swedenborg. And if, with

respect to Swedenborg's visions of the humanity of Christ, we have elsewhere referred to the spirituality of Teresa of Avila; and if, in terms of other texts, we have recognized a sensitivity akin to that of Pascal,¹⁰ now this last experience appears to us to be like a forerunner of some of the meditations of Kierkegaard. Moreover, Swedenborg was to experience this inner conflict that he suffers during his existential crisis, with *fear and trembling* (*fruchtan och bäfwan*, 12-13). All this we cite as evidence of the specifically Christian character of the mysticism of the *Drömbok*.

Throughout this heartfelt and invaluable document which is the *Journal of Dreams* (as we are seeing, they are not only dreams, but also visions and ecstasies), there is a constant that dominates everything. We are referring to the situation of conflict that Swedenborg suffers deep within himself, and that manifests itself in an antithesis of opposites. These opposites were irreconcilable at that time of profound personal crisis in the years 1743-1744, and in his subsequent works he would attempt to reconcile them. In these few pages we cannot do justice to the underlying problem that is implicit and explicit in this book on which we are commenting now, because this was not the object of our analysis either. But if we had to sum up in some way all these conflict-ridden oppositions we have been alluding to, we would do so with this text:

Afterwards I went out, and I saw many black images, one of those images that was hurled at me, I saw that it could not be adapted to the base; this meant that the ratio naturalis cannot be adapted to the spiritual, so I believe. (Night of the 25th and 26th)

In these words we can glimpse one of Swedenborg's typical dilemmas: natural reason over against spiritual reason (*esprit de géométrie* versus *esprit de finesse?*). This dilemma was to give rise to the later attempt at reconciliation; here it takes on different variations: inner-outward, *first life-other life* (*prima vita-altera vita*), *impurum-purum*, the strength of the Spirit or grace (*andans kraft, nåd*) and our unworthiness or sin (*owärdighet, synd*), and so forth. These expressions are a constant throughout the Book of Dreams; they reflect a fierce inner struggle between opposites, between double thinking (*dubbel tancke*), for as Swedenborg puts it, "*I was constantly struggling with double thoughts (dubbla tanckar), that were fighting against one another*" (12th and 13th). All these dualities reveal the state of great spiritual turbulence in which Swedenborg found himself, when he wrote this journal, and which was to lead to the abandonment of his scientific activity and the beginning of his theological work.

We have attempted to show in what way there coexist in the *Drömbok* two distinct, but not mutually exclusive, forms of spirituality. One we would call yogic or shamanistic, on account of its phenomenological similarity with what we know about that type of experience. It is fundamentally based on visions, experiences of split presence, descriptions of the subtle body, where breathing exercises take on great importance¹¹. The other kind of spiritual experience is marked by features that are Christian in the proper sense, and we have labeled it as mystical. Some examples are cited here which, we believe, confirm our opinion. Thus, the importance of Saint Paul and a series of Pauline problems, emotive visions of a human and suffering Jesus Christ, the importance of the Eucharist and the presence of a whole terminology that gives evidence of a governing core of specifically Christian ideas: grace (*nåd*), God's infinite grace (*Gudz oendeliga nåd*), Holy Spirit (*helge ande*), and also expressions proper to all the mystical traditions (*centrum: per incomprehensibilem circulum a centro—'center: through an incomprehensible circle from the center'*)... All this indicates that the concern that propels Swedenborg stems from motives of a Christian nature. Just a few clarifications on this point are in order. The *Drömbok* is the product of a profound crisis that was existential and painful. The series of visions and ecstasies which are described here does not extend into Swedenborg's later work. The mystical experiences of which the author has left a written record (even without the slightest desire to have them printed) begin and end in the *Drömbok*. Many of the problems dealt with in the *Journal of Dreams* have their continuity (and their solution, in Swedenborg's view) in the theological works (the relationship between faith and science, body and soul, free will, etc.), but the mystical images and experiences do not appear in later works; they belong exclusively to the period of 1743-1744. Of course, during this period, in Stockholm, The Hague, and London, Swedenborg frequented the centers of Baron Zinzendorf's Herrnhutians. This movement represented at that time a form of Protestant religiosity for which emotive and affective devotion were superimposed on pure fideism. But this influence alone does not account for the Christocentrism and the priority of the will over the understanding that we find in Swedenborg. The force and passion with which he describes his experiences goes beyond any possible circumstantial influence, and in the last analysis, they derive from his own personal spiritual experiences. Furthermore, it must be said that, as early as in 1744, Swedenborg was beginning to manifest his differences with respect to the Moravian Brothers.

Are these echoes of baroque mysticism or *devotio moderna*? Or an anti-deist reaction? Without a doubt, just like his original Pietist affiliations, these are factors that must be taken into account if one wants to explain Swedenborg's mystical phenomenology, as it appears in the *Drömbok*, to distinguish it both from his visions based on his capacity for ecstasy and from the speculative types of mysticism (for this reason we have at times compared him with Saint Teresa of Avila).

Another of the reasons why we believe in the reliability of the experiences that the Nordic writer relates to us is the absolute lack of literary stylization in the *Journal of Dreams*, and the fact that he never intended to publish it (indeed, the manuscript was lost for a long time), as well as the fact that he wrote it in Swedish (he published all his works in Latin). In this connection, a curious detail is that Swedenborg usually quotes the technical terms in Latin and even in French. For this reason, it would be crucial to make a study of the Swedish words he uses, because they certainly reveal the deepest stirrings of his spirit. The account of his visions, dreams, and ecstasies is reported in a very chaotic and non-systematic manner (and there are few authors that systematize as much as Swedenborg does), following only the impassioned impulses and stirrings of his soul.¹²

It has been our intent to show two forms of religiosity, or spirituality, or sensibility in the face of the transcendent, which we find in the *Drömbok*. As for these two phenomena, which occur at a critical moment in the life of Swedenborg, we have barely scratched the surface. The *Journal of Dreams*, which gives shape to that crisis in a reliable manner, is a document that is very rich in its contents and suggestions, both biographical and intellectual. With our approach to this work, we have sought to point to a few avenues of research both for understanding the life and work of Swedenborg and for the study of comparative mysticism in general.

Notes

1. Citations are made from the critical edition of Lars Bergquist, *Swedenborgs Drömbok. Glädjen och det stora kvalet* (Stockholm 1988). I have also used the French edition by Régis Boyer, *Le Livre des Rêves* (Paris 1985).
2. All these historical references can be found in the previously cited Bergquist edition, which contains a wealth of informative notes.
3. In the *Journal of Dreams* we find many references to historical characters related to the life and times of Swedenborg. Johan Hesselius (1687-1752) was a physician, an advisor of the Medical College and member of the Academy of Sciences, and thus a scientific authority in his time. Here we can see how the process of the interiorization of the human body begins, which eventually becomes the spiritual reality of the *Maximus Homo* (as Lars Bergquist aptly suggests). We are standing before a spiritualization of *Regnum Animale*, Swedenborg's last scientific work. It is also interesting to note how Swedenborg attempts to rationally organize his own dreams through his rational explanations.
4. It seems that Swedenborg is speaking of a trance of a yogic or shamanistic type, and even the symbolization of the external body as an image of the interior has its parallels with anthropologies of the subtle body. Faced with phenomena like these, Régis Boyer sought to connect Swedenborg with the ecstatic experiences of the traditional Scandinavian religions in his article *Swedenborg et l'âme scandinave* in *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres I-II* (1986) 55-69. This hypothesis seems rather problematic to prove, but it is undeniable that this typology of experiences of fury, ecstasy, and being present in more than one place is amply shown to us by the phenomenology of religions. We have attempted to sum it up under the category of shamanistic experiences. Thus, it seems to be legitimate to speak in the *Drömbok* of a given spiritual experience that corresponds to the characteristics of ecstatic awareness. This awareness is undeniably a form of religiosity. However, there also exists in the *Drömbok* another form of spirituality and religious sensibility.
5. This is a typically Swedenborgian theme: the dilemma posed between two opposites, characterized here as the internal man (*inwertes menniskian*) and the external man (*utwertes menniskian*).
6. For the first type of experience we are speaking of, the name of "natural mysticism" might be used, but this is a designation that does not seem at all adequate. At any rate, we cannot enter into a discussion on comparative mysticism here.
7. Here we are face to face with the crucial experience of Swedenborg's spiritual crisis. One emblematic Easter Sunday, having passed through the night from the sense of Good Friday and Holy Saturday, after receiving Communion in a

Pietist church in The Hague (we should not forget that Swedenborg was only passing through), our author emerges into the light of divine grace: this whole text manifests the step from anxiety (*änglan*) to grace (*nåd*). The Eucharist (*Gudz bord*, literally God's table) had great importance for the Moravian Brothers of Zinzendorf, a Pietist movement that was exerting great influence over the Swedish author at the time.

8. Gabriel Andreas Beyer (1721-1779) was one of Swedenborg's first Swedish followers. He was a professor of Greek and lived in Gothenburg, where a group of followers of Swedenborgian teachings sprang up. Friedrich Christoph Oetinger was one of the main philosophers of German Romanticism and the first translator of Swedenborg into German, on account of which he was censured by the government of Württemberg. Despite his interest, Oetinger (who was a Lutheran clergyman) remained aloof from Swedenborgian ideas. Both letters can be found in A. Acton (ed.), *The Letters and Memorials of Emanuel Swedenborg II* (Bryn Athyn, 1955), pp. 622-623.

9. The poor syntactical construction and the continuous lapses in style certainly enhance its sincerity and spontaneity, and in our judgment it is a proof of its truthfulness.

10. Let us compare these fragments from Swedenborg: "...and I heard words that no human language could express in this life, that splendor that came forth from here and that profound *délice*...; Praise, honor, glory to the Most High, may His name be sanctified, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Sabbaoth" (5-6); with these fragments from Pascal's Memorial: "God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, not of the philosophers or of the wise. Certainty. Certainty. Feeling. Joy. Peace. God of Jesus Christ" (Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*). These words doubtless denote mystical experiences that are phenomenologically comparable. But, beyond this, the similarity between Swedenborg and Pascal is not based only on these inner experiences. Between the two thinkers there is a common point that ties them together: both are scientists who come to question the general vision that the science of their time (fundamentally the Cartesian vision) provides of reality. Both, impelled by the longings and concerns of faith, need to go beyond their own scientific knowledge, in order to gain access to a transcendental dimension, and also to attain a conception with unity and synthesis, where opposites are reconciled.

11. As we know, in Eastern Christianity there exists hesychasm, a tradition of breathing exercises as a way of preparation for meditation. Moreover, studies on the notion of a subtle body can be found through the works of Mircea Eliade. (*Translator's note*: "hesychasm" from the Greek ἡσυχία [*hēsukhia*], 'stillness'. The term is associated with St. John Climacus who wrote in the seventh century: "Let the remembrance of Jesus be present with each breath," as well as with the voluminous body of literature known as the *Philokalia*.)

12. In this positive evaluation of the lack of literary stylization to judge the mystical writings, we are following the criterion of Louis Massignon in his work that is now a classic, *Expérience mystique et les modes de stylisation littéraire, Opera Minora*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1969). Massignon's methodology of analyzing mystical vocabularies as sources of spiritual meditation and devotion would also be applicable to Swedenborg.

[This article first appeared in Spanish in the journal *Isidorianum*, published by the Centro de Estudios Teológicos de Sevilla, vol. 6, no. 12, 1997. We are grateful to the author for permission to publish the translation.]



LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO