

Jacob Boehme (1575-1624) was a peasant shoemaker who was infused with mystical divine light and started writing marvelous books in which he described panoramic visions of the Being of God, the eternal generation of the Godhead, the birth of the cosmos and the fall of Lucifer. Scholars of the royal courts and universities of Germany were astounded that an unlearned sexton could produce works like *Aurora*, *The Three Principles of the Divine Essence* and *The Threefold Life of Man*. These writings thrilled Renaissance thinkers, enraged the guardians of old orthodoxies and led some from darkness to light, but were received impassively by no one.

His thought is difficult to categorize except in seemingly oxymoronic terms like Esoteric Christianity, philosophical mysticism, sacred science, spiritual alchemy, Sophianic Lutheranism, psychological cosmology. Boehme's philosophy synthesized two obscure seventeenth century intellectual movements (Germanic mysticism and philosophical alchemy) and, against all odds, became a significant force in the development of western science, art, philosophy and spirituality. Boehme has never been widely read and understood, but for the most part has been moderated to society by his interpreters—scientists and mystics, clergymen and occultists, scholars and fanatics. The diversity of thought inspired by Boehme indicates just how open to interpretation his highly figurative writings are. It has been said that the Boehmean literature is like a picnic to which Jacob brings the words and the reader brings the meaning. Boehme himself likens his writings to a looking glass wherein a man may see himself.

For three centuries Jacob Boehme's thought ran through the western world like a hidden stream, influencing Newton, Milton, George Fox, the Philadelphian Society, the Cambridge Platonists, the Bavarian Illuminati (!), Goethe, Kant, Heidegger, Blake, Coleridge, Emerson, William Law, Madam Blavatsky, Rudolf Steiner, Hegel and Schopenhauer, Wagner and Nietzsche, Martensen and his nemesis Kierkegaard, Carl Jung and Martin Buber; many occultists and many clergymen.

In the latter half of the 20th century Boehme lapsed into relative obscurity. His books remained difficult to find until 2010 when they were rescued from oblivion by, well, by this website. All of Boehme's works in English translation are now digitized and available on the [LIBRARY PAGE](#).