

## **Herman Vetterling, The Philosopher Of San Jose; Philangi Dasa, The Buddhist of Santa Cruz**

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Window in Herman Vetterling's House, Santa Cruz, CA

### Abstract

Herman Vetterling was a lifelong scholar whose spiritual development and accompanying publications were in the vanguard of non-traditional American religious evolution from the 1870s to the 1920s. Born in Sweden in 1849, Vetterling emigrated to Minnesota in 1871, turned away from his native Lutheranism, and in 1877 was ordained a Swedenborgian minister in Pennsylvania. Leaving the ministry in 1881, he graduated from the homeopathic medical school of Hahnemann Hospital in Chicago in 1883. Moving to a secluded home outside Santa Cruz, California, he published his first book, *Swedenborg the Buddhist*, in 1887 under the pseudonym of Philangi Dasa. From there he also wrote (again as Philangi Dasa) and published from 1888 to 1894 the monthly periodical *The Buddhist Ray*. Vetterling then moved to San Jose, California, where he practiced medicine, and where, in 1923 after 25 years of preparation, he published *The Illuminate of Goerlitz*, a detailed study of the Protestant mystic Jacob Boehme. In 1931 he died in San Jose.

### Lutheran childhood

Herman C. Vetterling was born in Sweden in August, 1849. He entered the United States on August 26, 1871, was living in Douglas County, Minnesota in 1872, and was naturalized as an American citizen in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania on April 15, 1880.<sup>1</sup> He had at least one brother and four half sisters.<sup>2</sup> It is possible that Swedish-born Wetterlings, also in Minnesota, were related.<sup>3</sup> Young Herman, it is said, attended "St. Paul's university [sic] in Minnesota," and "At one time, early in his career, he worked on a Minnesota newspaper, often gathering the news and writing the editorials."<sup>4</sup> His religious development, however, was of primary importance to him. Years later he wrote, "I was brought up in the Swedish [Lutheran] State Church. My mother was a pious woman, and she sought to inculcate what she supposed to be the truths of eternal life, especially by example."<sup>5</sup> Still more years later, in a passage about educating children by being harsh to them, beating them, for example, he adds, "As a further punishment, he was taken to church on Sundays, and had to sit there immovable for hours, and listen to a drone who exhorted the parents not to spare the rod and spoil the child. After this punishment in the church-hell — the writer speaks from personal experience — the boy was bidden to sit still in a corner at home, so as not to disturb God's rest."<sup>6</sup> Relating a childhood experience of mystery, if not of religion, "In his early boyhood," he confides, "the writer used to run through the Trojaburg at Wisby, Gotland; and he sometimes found it difficult to find the exit of it."<sup>7</sup> (The Trojaburg or Troy-town of Visby [current spelling] on the Swedish Island of Gotland is a low stonewall labyrinth thought to be 2,500 years old.)<sup>8</sup>

While still in his teens Herman read German, French, and American authors who had little, if any, good to say about traditional Lutheranism.<sup>9</sup> His spiritual journey began around 1872, when,

in his early twenties, he was seized by a fascination with the topic of immortality and began a fifty-year study of it and of psychic research.<sup>10</sup>

Swedenborgian and pastor of the Church of the New Jerusalem

By 1873 Vetterling had begun studies for the ministry at Urbana University in Urbana, Ohio on a scholarship from the Swedenborgian-inspired New Church. (“Founded in 1850 by followers of the 18th century Swedish philosopher and scientist, Emanuel Swedenborg,” Urbana still [2008] maintains an “informal relationship” with the New Church.<sup>11</sup>) Herman’s family did not support him in this venture; worse than that, they “would not assist me, because they considered the New Church to be an ‘infernal concern.’”<sup>12</sup> Herman studied at Urbana from 1873 to 1875, continued his studies for the New Church ministry in the Pittsburgh area, and was ordained in 1877.<sup>13</sup>

Emanuel Swedenborg, who died in 1774, left a legacy of writings concerning knowledge he had acquired about the spirit world in out-of-body experiences. Among other concepts, he promoted the idea that there was now a new era in the world and that the Christian Church should recognize this. Inspired by his insights, followers, especially in England, organized the Church of the New Jerusalem, or simply the New Church. The movement spread quickly to the United States, and the first New Church was formally established in Baltimore in 1800. By 1822 New Church congregations were to be found as far west as St. Charles, Missouri.<sup>14</sup> Fifty years later, in Herman Vetterling’s day, however, New Church congregations were still rare; in the 1890 U. S. Census Statistics of Churches the Church of the New Jerusalem counted only 7,095 members in the whole country. In spite of such small numbers Swedenborgianism exerted an influence beyond the New Church through association with the intellectual movement Transcendentalism, with the popular movement Spiritualism, and with the growing knowledge of Buddhism and Hinduism in the United States.

From 1877 to 1881 Rev. Vetterling served as New Church pastor pro tem in Pittsburgh and pastor in Detroit.<sup>15</sup> He also served the church congregations in Greenford and Salem, Ohio.<sup>16</sup> In 1881 the Detroit Post and Tribune newspaper accused him of misconduct on the excursion boat, the Alaska, specifically, that he had been publicly drunk and had molested two young women. He protested his innocence and his congregation stood by him, but within two months of the alleged incident he asked to be relieved of his post.<sup>17</sup>

Theosophy phase

Details of Vetterling’s life between 1881 and 1886 are scanty. In a fictionalized autobiographical account he pointed to a fiasco in his efforts to build a tower (New Church congregation) and his rejection by the community that had commissioned him to build it. After that, according to the thinly veiled references, he worked for a year for “some gentle-folk that dwelt by a lake (Chicago), but then traveled northwest (to St. Paul), where he stayed, also for a year. In the latter city he heard about an “Order of Purity,” which, before he left the city, he discovered to be hypocritical.<sup>18</sup>

Known facts are that he left Detroit and quickly sought New Church support for entering Hahnemann homeopathic Medical College in Philadelphia. He graduated, however, from

Hahnemann, also homeopathic, Medical College in Chicago in 1883.<sup>19</sup> The last the New Church organization heard of him was in 1885, and he was dropped from the New Church rolls in 1888.<sup>20</sup> He is reported to have been a “resident of Chicago, 1882-1886,”<sup>21</sup> and there is evidence that he joined the Theosophical Society in 1884 while living in St. Paul.<sup>22</sup>

Vetterling’s intellectual production between 1883 and 1887 consisted of an 1884-1885 series of seven articles presenting Swedenborg’s teaching in Helena Blavatsky and Henry Steel Olcott’s periodical *The Theosophist*.<sup>23</sup> The articles were a clear summary of Swedenborg’s major points, especially his understanding of the deficiencies of Christianity and his notion of the structure of the universe. Vetterling featured Swedenborg’s theory of correspondence, according to which the three levels of existence, celestial, spiritual, and earthly are, as it were, stacked one above the other so that events in each are found also in the others, but in an appropriately more spiritual or less spiritual form. Vetterling gave very little space to Swedenborg’s spiritual exegeses, which constitute a huge part of the Swedish mystic’s writings.<sup>24</sup>

Vetterling’s relationship with the Theosophical Society was a bridge between his Swedenborgianism and his Buddhism. The society was founded in 1875 in New York by Helena Blavatsky and Henry Steel Olcott. Its original position, as presented in Blavatsky’s 1877 book *Isis Unveiled*, was that the source of all religions was in India, that wise men there who still preserved the ancient religious wisdom had mysterious powers, and that Blavatsky herself had learned this in her travels in India.<sup>25</sup> In 1879 she and Olcott moved to India, where they established the society’s headquarters and began to proclaim themselves Buddhists. Olcott, in fact, produced in 1881 the *Buddhist Catechism*, which was acceptably accurate to many Buddhists.<sup>26</sup>

From her headquarters in India Helena Blavatsky announced that she was receiving letters from Mahatmas, teachers of the ancient religious wisdom. The letters, although material, were delivered by spiritual hands. They added explanations of the origin of the world and its hierarchy of spiritual beings from God down to man, a neo-platonic type of world structure that was found in some unorthodox Christian groups, in various other religious traditions in Western Asia, in Swedenborg, and in some Buddhist traditions. The potential of Theosophy for expressing the commonalities of all these groups led to the 1884 publication of *Esoteric Buddhism* by the English Theosophist Alfred P. Sinnett. Claiming that the ancient body of religious knowledge that had been lost to the world in general had been preserved in Buddhism, Sinnett wrote, “This secret knowledge, in reality, long antedated the passage through earth-life of Gautama Buddha. Brahminical philosophy, in ages before Buddha, embodied the identical doctrine which may now be described as Esoteric Buddhism.”<sup>27</sup>

Herman Vetterling was not to be left out of the ideas that were swirling in and around Theosophism. Having interpreted Swedenborg for Blavatsky and Olcott’s followers, he went on to proclaim that the Swedish mystic also agreed with Sinnett’s primitive Buddhism. Vetterling’s book on this topic, *Swedenborg the Buddhist; or The Higher Swedenborgianism; Its Secrets; and Thibetan Origin*, was published in 1887 by the “Buddhistic Swedenborgian Brotherhood,” in Los Angeles.<sup>28</sup> His study bore the name, not of Herman Vetterling, but of a pseudonym, Philangi Dasa.<sup>29</sup>

Swedenborg the Buddhist incorporated a great deal from Alfred Sinnett's Esoteric Buddhism. In particular it followed Sinnett's outline.<sup>30</sup> Vetterling also accepted the thesis that the ancient wisdom had been transmitted through Hinduism to Buddhism. He added what seems to be an original analysis, that the ancient wisdom maintained by the Buddhist monks was the same as that which Swedenborg, in his dreams and visions, had learned to be a pre-Hebrew-Bible book that had been lost in all the world except in "Greater Tartary." Swedenborg's Greater Tartary consisted of Tibet, Mongolia, and the area between them.<sup>31</sup>

In Swedenborg the Buddhist one sees for the first time Vetterling's extensive background knowledge. Philangi Dàsa and the people who, as the book tells it, engage in religious dialog with him, cite no fewer than 152 distinct sources other than Swedenborg himself. Only 28 of these are from esoteric works and mysticism. Another 42 are from the sacred scriptures of many religions and their commentators. The rest are descriptive material from history, travel, philosophy, and science. The marshalling of huge amounts of material to support his (dubious) thesis is a characteristic of Vetterling, which will appear again.

A notable omission in the sources is American Transcendentalism. By the time Herman Vetterling came along, the Transcendentalists — Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry Thoreau, Walt Whitman, and others — had brought Hinduism and Buddhism to the attention of American intellectuals and had spread a great deal of accurate information about them. The only Transcendentalist Swedenborg the Buddhist cites is Samuel Johnson, who held indeed that the source of the world's religions was in the Himalayas,<sup>32</sup> but, who, like the other Transcendentalists, was concerned with the universality of basic human religion and not with occult lore about it.<sup>33</sup>

Philangi Dàsa's view of the relationship between Swedenborg and Buddhism was well received by Theosophists, rejected by Swedenborgians, and accepted with interest by Japanese Buddhists.<sup>34</sup>

Vetterling's Home, Santa Cruz, CA

The Buddhist of Santa Cruz

By the time Swedenborg the Buddhist was published, its author was living in the mountains ten miles from Santa Cruz, California. Why he chose to live in that place is a mystery, although a clue to it might be the report in a Santa Cruz newspaper that "In Scott's Valley is a gentleman who is at present engaged in writing a work on 'Theosophy.'" In the city of Santa Cruz, according to the article, there was a Theosophical Society which had "Brahministic beliefs" based on Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia* and Madame Blavatsky's works.<sup>35</sup> At least there was in the Santa Cruz area a group of people who could be sympathetic to Vetterling. It was even rumored back east that he "attempted to establish some kind of theosophical brotherhood in the country."<sup>36</sup> Another view of his move is in one of the dreams of Philangi Dàsa in Swedenborg the Buddhist: having heard about the Guardians of the Lost Word in the Himalayas, he traveled "through lone dales and along brant and craggy mountains, and through swift rivers and stormy lakes."<sup>37</sup> Then, after a year of wandering, "I began one morning to walk toward a mountain.

The foot-hills were beautiful; well shaded and watered. When I was got about ten miles, I found myself on a hill from which I could overlook a little dale that edged the foot of the mountain.”<sup>38</sup> Here he found the “little white marble temple” in which a long dialog, the main action of Swedenborg the Buddhist, takes place.

The Vetterling home, on Mount Roberta, between Scotts Valley and the community of Glenwood, although far from being a white marble temple, was a substantial two-story structure which still stands. A special decorative touch, also still present, was a round stained glass window showing the Sanskrit characters AUM inscribed in a hexagon. Later owners of the property knew there was a printing press in a nearby small building and that there was a fireproof vault built into the hillside. The mountain brook which flowed a few feet below the living room was called “Mahatma Creek,” and it was reported that the man who lived there was a student of Theosophy and, perhaps, a Hindu. <sup>39</sup>

Herman Vetterling’s house and twelve acres of land on Mt. Roberta were bought in early 1886 not by Herman, but by his wife-to-be, Margaret Curry Pitcairn.<sup>40</sup> Born in 1838 in Ohio, Margaret was the daughter of the Scottish born Robert Pitcairn, a prosperous merchant in western Ohio. When Robert died in Pittsburgh in 1855, his widow and children remained there. Another Pitcairn family, relatives of Robert’s, became better known: not only did one son become an executive with the Pennsylvania Railroad, but another son was the co-founder of the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, and as such he was one of the industrial tycoons of Pittsburgh. Both Pitcairn families were members of the New Church.<sup>41</sup>

While serving the New Church in Pittsburgh, Herman Vetterling had fallen in love with a young Pitcairn woman (not of the lineage of Robert). The young lady did not reciprocate his ardor, and it seems clear that his later sigh, “In our younger days we, too, wrote religious poetry. The inspiration came from a blue eyed maiden, — who, by the way, later jilted us, thinking she could do better,” referred to her.<sup>42</sup> It happened, however, that Margaret C. Pitcairn, the young woman’s aunt, ten years older than Herman, fixed her affections on him.<sup>43</sup>

Although Margaret bought the Mt. Roberta property in her own name, she, as Margaret C. Vetterling, and Herman C. Vetterling sold it in 1894.<sup>44</sup> Their marriage, which was not recorded in Santa Cruz County, took place in or about 1890 according to the U. S. Census of 1900.

The face Herman Vetterling presented to Santa Cruz is recorded in the Santa Cruz Daily Surf of October 18, 1887: “Dr. H. C. Vetterling of Glenwood has connected himself with Dr. W. S. Hall of this city.... Dr. Vetterling is a specialist on diseases of the eye and ear and Dr. Hall gives special attention to refractive difficulties of the eye.” Available city guides enable one to trace Vetterling’s medical practice in Santa Cruz only through 1889,<sup>45</sup> and in 1893 he himself characterized his activities as “woodchopping, digging, hoeing, planting, printing, etc., etc.”<sup>46</sup>

The other face of Herman Vetterling, however, the face of Philangi Dàsa, was recognized by the Surf on January 8, 1889, with the comment,

‘A prophet is not without honor save in his own country’ —The Salinas Indexpays this tribute to a Santa Cruz journal of which we have never heard:

The Buddhist Ray, published at Santa Cruz and devoted to Buddhism in Swedenborg in particular, has completed the first year of its existence. It is an 8-page octavo, beautifully printed on thick tinted book paper, and ably edited. We wish the Ray another successful year.

The primary activity of woodchopper on Mt. Roberta was certainly the writing, editing, printing, and distributing of The Buddhist Ray. In the first issue, January, 1888, the as yet unnamed editor claimed, “we believe ours to be the first Buddhist baby born in Christendom.”<sup>47</sup> Whatever the correct understanding of this attribution may be, the importance of the launching of such a publication at that time has not escaped the attention of scholars of the history of Buddhism in the United States. Paul Carter, Rick Fields, Thomas Tweed, and Andre Vashestov summarize the highlights of The Buddhist Ray in their works cited in the bibliography. Here a few basic remarks seem in order. The message of The Buddhist Ray is grounded in the esoteric Buddhism of Sinnett, it incorporates the revelations of Swedenborg, and it looks like the Buddhism of Olcott. In its early issues the Ray showed sympathy for Theosophy, and until the end it persevered in showing respect for Henry Steel Olcott. By 1894, however, the editor had nothing but harsh criticism for Helena Blavatsky,<sup>48</sup> and, as far as the doctrines of Theosophy are concerned, the editor proclaimed, “We have read all the publications of that society, including those of the Miracle Section, but have not found any hidden knowledge in them: rather, extracts from gentile and mediaeval books, plagiarisms, forgeries, hypnotic delusions, spiritualistic phenomena, and irish cock-and-bull stories.”<sup>49</sup>

The young Ray devoted much space to Vetterling’s contention that Swedenborg was basically a Buddhist, but gradually it said less and less about that. From the beginning to the end of its course, it never tired of extolling the ancient roots of Buddhism and of jabbing at what the editor construed to be Christianity’s doctrinal and moral inferiority to Buddhism. Here and there it would make some vitriolic comment about the Church of the New Jerusalem.

Articles from the Ray were disseminated in translation in Japan.<sup>50</sup> Some other Buddhist communities, especially in Ceylon, subscribed in appreciable numbers.<sup>51</sup> The journal also attracted financial support from Henry Steel Olcott, himself, who contributed three pounds sterling.<sup>52</sup> Philangi Dâsa was “made a member of the Advisory Committee of the Religious Congress to be held in Chicago in connection with the 1893 World’s Fair.”<sup>53</sup> His views on Swedenborg even appeared as an article in a French review, *Le Lotus Bleu: Revue theosophique*.<sup>54</sup>

The Buddhist Ray reveals clearly the sensitive and often bitter feelings of its editor, but it contains little reference to his own person and life.<sup>55</sup> At one point he announced the formation — evidently under his guidance — of the “Purana Silence Society” for women who were to take vows of chastity (including conjugal) and humility and were to stand up in public.<sup>56</sup> The Ray, however, made no further mention of the group. In the sixth year of its publication it advertised 5×8 photos of its “home.”<sup>57</sup> Toward the end of its run the Ray took an interest in anti-vivisection, devoting one of the final issues to this topic.<sup>58</sup> Here and there an article in the Ray would bear the name of Philangi Dâsa, but it was not until the very last issue, November-December, 1894, that, in announcing the demise of the Ray he identified Dâsa as editor. Only a

year earlier the Santa Cruz Surf newspaper had reviewed the Ray favorably, acknowledging that the editor lived in the mountains, but declining to name him.<sup>59</sup>

Lacking letters, diaries, or other personal records, one can only guess why the Vetterlings left the Santa Cruz area to move to San Jose. Presumably the opportunities for him as a homeopathic doctor were greater in the larger city. However that may be, I will hazard the opinion that Herman felt the need to move away from his Buddhism as physically as he was moving away from it spiritually. During the seven years of *The Buddhist Ray* he had come to realize that what he had taken for Buddhism was the Olcott characterization of it. Always a scholar, he had learned that the origins of Buddhism lay not in the primitive revelation of the Himalayas, but in an evolution of Hinduism, and that Swedenborg's notion of ancient books maintained in Greater Tartary had no basis in fact. As Herman moved away from his Buddhism, so he moved away from the place which he felt to be identified with it.

#### Physician and scholar of comparative religion in San Jose

The oldest record I could find that Herman and Margaret Vetterling were residents of San Jose is the 1900 U. S. Census.<sup>60</sup> The San Jose city directories tell us that from 1901 to 1927 Herman's address was 527 McLaughlin Avenue, which is in East San Jose, about one hundred yards outside the San Jose city limits of that period, but well within the city now. From 1928 to 1931 he was living at 1114 Cook Street, close to the present San Jose airport. He was a physician from 1901 to 1907, a farmer from 1910 to 1916, and had no stated occupation in other years, although the 1920 U. S. Census listed him as a retired physician.<sup>61</sup> Margaret Curry Vetterling, "Maggie," was mentioned as his wife in the directories for 1911-1912 through 1913-1914. She died in January, 1915, at the age, it seems, of 73. On January 28, 1915 Herman C. Vetterling filed a petition for probate of the will of Margaret C. Vetterling in the Superior Court of Santa Clara County. "The estate is valued at not more than \$10,000."<sup>62</sup>

In addition to his domestic activities in San Jose, Herman attended to the building of an animal shelter and the founding of the Santa Clara Humane Society. In 1928 he "commenced the erection of an animal shelter in Willow Glen [south of downtown San Jose]." Work was halted by action of the city, but he "later built another shelter, on which he spent more than \$50,000, on the Stevens Creek road east of the Winchester road [west of downtown]. It has been in disuse for some time."<sup>63</sup> In 1928 he resigned from the Santa Clara County Humane Society "because of differences over the terms of a gift of a \$50,000 animal shelter."<sup>64</sup>

No doubt Vetterling could have written much about his medical experiences, especially in San Jose, but his published writings contain little reference to himself as a physician. The most descriptive is, "In former days, the writer cured instantly many persons merely by stroking them with his hands; or by giving them tinctured water or sugar-pills. They thought he gave them 'powerful medicine;' and he let them think so."<sup>65</sup> It appears, nevertheless, that his medical practice made it possible for him to observe the unusual behavior of people, including psychic or paranormal phenomena. In making these observations he considered himself to be an intellectual and scientific observer and not at all a Spiritualist or Psychic. Still, he was convinced that many of the phenomena proposed as paranormal were genuine. Some examples follow:

“One evening while reading in his study, a Voice said to the writer: ‘Do you want to see your departed friend? — Yes. — Then I will cause her to appear to you in a dream, and I will touch and awaken you.’ The Voice kept his word. The representation in the dream — which occurred immediately before waking on the following morning — was not a mere picture or statue, but a living and moving person, an improved likeness of his departed friend.”<sup>66a</sup> (One wonders if the departed friend was Herman’s wife, Margaret, who preceded him in death and whom he called “my faithful friend” in the dedication of his last book.)

“The writer was taught to despise the ‘pseudo-science,’ [astrology] and he did despise it, until he met a true astrologer, who cast and read his horoscope.”<sup>66b</sup> Then, “Many times when the writer was puzzled about the acts of persons about him — acts which were contrary to their own interest — he found, by ascertaining the time of their birth, that the causes of it lay in the constellation under which they were born, which compelled them to act as they acted.”<sup>66c</sup>

“A friend asked the writer if he believed in fairies, and he answered, ‘Yes: and they are creatures of the elements, and belong to the semi-physical nature, who are now and then able to make themselves visible; especially to children to whom they take a fancy.’”<sup>66d</sup>

Herman witnessed the actions of a Kakodaimon, i.e., a phenomenon called diabolic possession by many, but which, he says, proceeds from the Center of the person.<sup>66e</sup>

An Animist, according to Vetterling, is a person so in touch with the psychic power, “the personal ‘Daimon,’” in him that he can read sealed letters, look backward or forward in time, learn people’s secrets, and do other things that “psychics” do. <sup>66f</sup>

“In the course of thirty years, the writer has not been able to find a medium among his spiritistic friends; only more or less developed animists or pseudo-mediums.”<sup>66g</sup> Again, “In thirty years intercourse with the priests and priestesses of the cult [“spiritism,” i. e., spiritualism], the writer did not through one of them come in contact with any devil or angel. They all manifested a slightly awakened Anima under a slightly developed Mind. In other words, he found them all self-deluded animists.”<sup>66h</sup>

“On one occasion, in the presence of an animist (or medium), the writer saw a solid iron-ring of the thickness of an ordinary leadpencil [sic]. And [sic] ten inches in diameter, dematerialized and rematerialized with the rapidity of a flash.”<sup>66i</sup>

“Some years ago, the writer was, after a week’s intensive search, unable to find a costly jewel and a valuable document that had belonged to a defunct intimate friend, whose legal executor he was. For moral and legal reasons it was important that both should be found. When he was in a state of despair about the matter, he received one day through a psychograph [ouija board] (under the influence of a friend) a message, indicating the place where the jewel was hidden; and a week later through the same psychograph (under the influence of another friend) a second message indicating the place where the document was hidden — which was in a safe two thousand miles away, in which it had lain forgotten 30 years.”<sup>66j</sup> The clues in this narrative all point to the jewel and document’s having been Margaret’s and having been left behind in Pittsburgh or, possibly, Chicago or St. Paul.



Lastly, Vetterling was very interested in the Tincture, which was well known to alchemists, and was often called the Philosopher's Stone. He agreed with others that one of its powers was the transmutation of elements, but he also wrote of its broader powers as the "universal life-power of the world."<sup>66k</sup>

All these examples are quoted from Herman Vetterling's last, longest, and most personally revealing work, *The Illuminate of Goerlitz or Jakob Boehme's (1575-1624) Life and Philosophy: A Comparative Study*.<sup>67</sup> Published in 1923, but written over a period of 25 years, this massive tome of 1500 pages went back beyond Blavatsky, beyond Swedenborg, to Jakob (Jacob) Boehme, a Protestant Christian mystic, an untutored shoemaker who felt inspired by God to write many volumes about the Christian faith. The term Theosophist was coined to refer to him, two centuries before Madame Blavatsky and Henry Steele Olcott began to use the term to describe their doctrines, which were quite different from his. In Boehme Vetterling saw human spirituality in its finest, deepest, simplest form, which predated Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, Swedenborgians, Spiritualists, and Theosophists and yet lived on in the midst of all these imperfect forms.<sup>68</sup>

Herman was citing Boehme with approval as far back as 1887 in *Swedenborg the Buddhist*.<sup>69</sup> He may have become acquainted with Boehme in his early, formative period, since it was said, apparently on Vetterling's own authority, that "It was from the hands of a simple peasant that Dr. Vetterling received the first of Boehme's works. From another later, he got the loan of the complete set."<sup>70</sup>

Attracted to Boehme as a mystic, a spiritual figure, Vetterling was less interested in the *Illuminate's* lengthy explanations of Christian beliefs than he was in his contention that there was a basic religion for mankind — the kind of original and universal religion which the young Herman had thought he saw in Buddhism. Thus the mature Herman placed his study of Boehme under the heading *Comparative Religion* and wrote, "The study of comparative religion has led men everywhere to magnify the assonances rather than the dissonances of the great religions, and this has promoted tolerance and fraternity among their enlightened devotees."<sup>71</sup>

Boehme, however, was to Vetterling more than a person of religious insights: he was a thinker and a discoverer. Two texts from the *Illuminate* will suffice here to illustrate this:

"Boehme was the first man in the West to discover, describe, and set forth the sufficiency of the Forces of man's Center for the producing of nearly all psychic and mental phenomena. Before him, they had been attributed exclusively to gods, angels, saints, and demons."<sup>72</sup>

"Jakob Boehme was not only a profound philosopher but also a profound naturalist; and, *mirabile dictu*, ... many ideas and discoveries, generally held to be strictly modern, had either been treated of or adverted to in his writings; but had since his day lain hidden in them under a thick crust of alchemic, astrologic, and theologic cant; most of it beyond the comprehension of the average mind. This discovery, that Boehme was not a mere Biblical exegete and mystery-monger as he has generally been represented — but a spiritual and natural philosopher, animated the writer to present him to like-thinking spirits in this comparative form."<sup>73</sup>

To prove his point Vetterling called upon an enormous bibliography of religious, historical, and scientific sources and made the promised comparisons for about 1200 pages. After that the text of the *Illuminate* becomes a vehicle less for open-minded scholarship than for Vetterling to give his final opinions on many topics, including religion, society, education, and women. His last thoughts, however, on matters which had been of paramount importance to him are scattered here and there in the first 1200 pages as remarks on appropriate topics. As far as the lost books of Greater Tartary are concerned, he came to think:

“The belief that the illiterate nomads of Central Asia possess a mysterious literature has no foundation in fact. Not a single proof of it has so far been found.”<sup>74a</sup> Again, citing Boehme, “through his descent into the sphere of gross matter, man has lost the knowledge and the control of the Sixth Force of his nature, the Sound-Force, which is the ultimate creative Force; and through the same event, he has lost the Language of Nature. The Sound-Force and the Language of Nature, then, are together, the Ancient or Lost Word; and not any syllable, word, or phrase, nor any mysterious book hidden in Egypt, Great Tartary, or in any other earthly locality.”<sup>74b</sup>

About religion in general, this is his observation:

All the “leading” religions are superstitions, including Buddhism and Jainism, which are benign, and Jewish, Christian, and Moslem, which persecute and massacre.<sup>74c</sup> “The writer believes that if the churches were closed for two generations, morality and religion would gain by it.”<sup>74d</sup>

About his original quest, asking whether life is worth living if it is terminated by death,<sup>74e</sup> Herman, after fifty years of study, came to the conclusion,

“Although the writer has read every prominent spiritistic writer — from Swedenborg down — he can not point to a single one of them for a trustworthy account of the real and permanent after-life. It seems to be a law that we are allowed to know that there is another, invisible world about us; and to obtain illusory views of it; and that we are, on rare occasions, allowed to communicate with certain denizens of it, and through them to obtain illusory delineations of their life. That is all. This belief of the writer is supported by a large number of psychic researchers, and even by spiritists.”<sup>74f</sup>

Herman C. Vetterling died in his home in San Jose on September 5, 1931, at 82 years of age. The long, front page San Jose Mercury Herald article which appeared the next day did not mention the New Church, Theosophy, Buddhism, or Philangi Dàsa. It told about his benefactions to animals and it stated that he was a physician, but above all, it described him as the author of *The Illuminant of Gorlitz* [sic], and the title proclaimed in large letters, “SAN JOSE WRITER OF PHILOSOPHY CALLED BY DEATH.” In Santa Cruz he was at least remembered with a short newspaper article which reported that he had edited the *Buddhist Ray* in Santa Cruz in the 1890s, although it did not mention that he had done this under a pseudonym.<sup>75</sup>

According to the Petition for Probate of Will, entered September 15, 1931 in the Superior Court of Santa Clara County, his estate was valued at \$47,500. Having no children, he left discrete

amounts to his nearest relatives, especially his nephew, Herman A. Vetterling, to whom he bequeathed \$3,000 and the contents of his house in San Jose. Another \$2,200 was to be divided between his three half-sisters (or their descendants), his two nieces, and his grandnephew, Herman Pitcairn Vetterling. He remembered Michael Hebers, who had looked after his house while he was away, leaving him the house. Margaret King, who nursed him in his final illness, was to receive \$1,000 and Maud, his fox-terrier. The greater portion of the estate, about \$30,000, was to be divided between the Humane Societies of San Jose, Oakland, and Berkeley.

There seems to be no idealism, no spirituality, to say nothing of religion, in this will. An oblique reference to his spiritual and intellectual interests, however, is the \$500 it left to Edythe Urmev of Berkeley for the maintenance of his library. "The library of Dr. Vetterling, containing hundreds of books, many of them several hundred years old, combined with the books of the late William Barber, well-known book lover, will form a collection to be known as the Memorial Library of Philosophy. It has been arranged and catalogued by Miss Urmev, who has it in charge, and is housed at 2731 Dwight Way, Berkeley."<sup>76</sup>

Herman's final feelings about his wife Margaret had been expressed in the *Illuminate of Goerlitz*, which was "Dedicated to the memory of Margaret Curry Pitcairn, my faithful friend, who though unaware of it, carried out during her earthly pilgrimage, the Mazdean formula of purity — 'good thoughts, good words, and good deeds;' and who enabled me to pen and publish the following pages; for which she deserves to be held in grateful remembrance not only by me, but also by all sympathetic students of the *Illuminate of Goerlitz*."<sup>77</sup>

### Role in history

In 1956? [sic] the San Jose Public Library published a booklet, *Authors of Santa Clara County*, in which the name of Herman C. Vetterling appeared. One hundred percent of the information given about him in this publication came from the San Jose newspaper article announcing his death.

Vetterling's inclusion in the *Authors of Santa Clara County* is testimony mainly to the fact that his name was never lost among scholars of Jacob Boehme. In 1930 Howard Brinton, faculty member at Mills College in Oakland, California, included in his study of Boehme a bibliographical reference to Vetterling's work and wrote in the preface, "Dr. Herman Vetterling has generously allowed me the use of his collection of books by and about Jacob Boehme."<sup>78</sup> Other books on Boehme which cited Vetterling as a scholarly source on the subject came out in 1928, 1932, 1996, and 2004.<sup>79</sup>

In spite of some scholarly interest in him, perhaps Herman Vetterling would have remained hidden to the broader public if it had not been for the growing American interest in Buddhism. In the guise of Philangi Dàsa he made such a contribution to American Buddhism that he could not remain in the shadows. As far as I have been able to ascertain, the first appearance of Dàsa in this connection was in Paul Allen Carter's 1971 book, *The Spiritual Crisis of the Gilded Age*. Carter observed that in the 1890s some Americans writing about the religions and philosophies of Asia were saying — contrary to the conviction of Americans in general — that these were superior to Christianity. Among these writers, according to Carter, was Philangi Dàsa, publisher

of The Buddhist Ray, who “expressed satisfaction that the ‘heathens’ at the World’s Parliament of Religions had behaved better than Joseph Cook [a notoriously narrow minded Christian].”<sup>80</sup>

In 1981 Rick Fields published his popular book, *How the Swans Came to the Lake: A narrative History of Buddhism in America*. Fields pointed out that Dàsa’s book on Swedenborg and the publication of the Ray were part of the movement to make Americans familiar with Buddhism.<sup>81</sup> Whereas Carter had been silent about Dàsa’s background, Fields identified him as Vetterling, although he did not include biographical facts.

It remained for a contemporary scholar of religion in America, Thomas Tweed, to develop Field’s contention that Vetterling/Dasa had a significant role in the history of Buddhism in America and to provide some biographical detail about him in his 1992 work, *The American Encounter with Buddhism, 1844-1912*.<sup>82</sup>

Both of Vetterling’s books, *Swedenborg the Buddhist* and *The Illuminate of Goerlitz*, are now (2008) available in reprints, and there is also a new edition of the former. Vetterling is somewhat controversial; the opinion of scholars is not entirely favorable. The Boehme scholar, Bruce B. Janz, says in his website that *The Illuminate of Goerlitz* is “A very long outline of Boehme’s theosophical system. More devotional than scholarly.”<sup>83</sup> The late Swedenborgian psychologist and theological writer Wilson Van Dusen took the trouble to peruse Swedenborg the Buddhist, and exclaimed, “I am afraid after examining it, I threw it away.”<sup>84</sup>

A strong positive light is thrown on Vetterling by New Church minister and scholar of Swedenborgianism, Andrei Vashestov, who, in the introduction to the new edition of *Swedenborg the Buddhist*, points out that “Vetterling, in the final analysis, was not a champion simply of Buddhism, or of Swedenborg, or theosophy, or Boehme, but of spiritual inquiry, freedom, self-determination, and the human quest for the divine. Vetterling deserves recognition and remembrance for his contributions. He should be praised as a pioneer in the study of comparative religion.”<sup>85</sup>

If comparative religion is taken to mean a dispassionate observation of the characteristics of many religions, it scarcely seems that Herman Vetterling qualifies. For one thing, he felt a warm personal attachment to Jacob Boehme: on page 24 of *the Illuminate* he tells us, “It was the red-letter day of his life, when the writer visited Boehme’s grave — which he found on a steep hillside among trees and weather-beaten and moss-begrown monuments — and placed a wreath on it.” More telling, however, is the fact that he had a strong personal idea of what religion ought to be, and he sought to show how this is found in the various forms religion has taken. In the final analysis the painstaking labor he took to gather sources and to point out in great detail innumerable similarities between the major religions of the world and to show how their more spiritual characteristics embodied Jacob Boehme’s mystical intuition was at least the work of a dedicated scholar.

Finally, one can appreciate Herman Vetterling as a life-long observer of religious and mystical phenomena who did not claim that he was a mystic. Instead, he went through a series of true believer stages and in the end had his own opinions, his personal spiritual synthesis.

## Acknowledgments

Thanks to Michael Yockey, Librarian of the Swedenborgian House of Studies in Berkeley, and Susan Sacharski, Archivist of Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago, for valuable documents. Thanks also to the current owners of the property where the Vetterlings lived on Mount Roberta for letting me see the house and for furnishing the photo of the symbol window. Special thanks to Marion Pokriots, who interest in the strange house on Mount Roberta occasioned this study.

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## Notes

1. These facts, other than the month and year of his birth, are in the Western Pennsylvania Genealogy Society Quarterly, Vol. 5, p. 107, "A list of immigrants who applied for naturalization papers in the District Courts of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania." According to the 1900 U. S. Census, he was born in August, 1849. The 1900 Census states that he entered the United States in 1860, the 1920 Census has him entering the country in 1873 and being naturalized in 1876, and the 1930 census records merely that he entered in 1873. More in line with the court naturalization record is his 1884 letter to Edward Maitland, where he states that he had been "in America about twelve years," in *Vashestov, Swedenborg the Buddhist*, Introduction, p. xiii.
2. Last Will and Testament of Herman C. Vetterling, August 19, 1931.
3. According to the 1870 U. S. Census, Carl Wetterling, 38, born in Sweden, and his wife, also born in Sweden, lived in Holmes City, Douglas County, Minnesota. No children lived with them. Next door to Carl lived Joseph Wetterling.
4. San Jose Mercury Herald, Sep. 6, 1931.
5. Vetterling, letter to Edward Maitland, in *Vashestov, Swedenborg the Buddhist*, Introduction, p. xiii.
6. *The Illuminate of Goerlitz*, p. 1206.
7. *Illuminate*, p. 152.
8. For extensive information, including photos, on this and other labyrinths see [www.mymaze.de](http://www.mymaze.de) (2008).
9. Vetterling to Edward Maitland, in *Vashestov, Swedenborg the Buddhist*, Introduction, p. xiii.

10. The Illuminate of Goerlitz, p. VII.
11. [www.urbana.edu](http://www.urbana.edu) (2008).
12. New Jerusalem Messenger, Aug. 1, 1877.
13. New Jerusalem Messenger, complementary articles of July 18 and August 1, 1877.
14. Marguerite Block, *The New Church in the New World*, pp. 114-115.
15. Horace B. Blackmer, Note.
16. Vashestov, *Swedenborg the Buddhist*, Introduction, p. xvii.
17. Vashestov, loc. cit.
18. *Swedenborg the Buddhist*, pp. 22-28.
19. Vashestov, *Swedenborg the Buddhist*, Introduction, pp. xvii to xix, in addition to describing the incident in Detroit, prints the letter in which Vetterling states that he intends to go to Philadelphia to study. The name Herman C. Vetterling, however, is on the February 19, 1883 list of the graduates of the Hahnemann Medical College of Chicago class of 1882-1883 (courtesy of Northwestern Memorial Hospital Archives). Homeopathy was developed by Samuel Hahnemann, a German physician who died in 1843. The history of homeopathy can be found on [www.homeoinfo.com](http://www.homeoinfo.com) (2008). The affinity, which was real, although not institutional, between homeopathy and American Swedenborgianism is treated by Block, *The New Church in the New World*, pp. 160-165.
20. Blackmer, Note.
21. Blackmer, Note.
22. Tweed, *The American Encounter with Buddhism*, p. 187.
23. *The Theosophist*, The Theosophical Society, Madras, India, Vol. 6, October, December, 1884 and July, August, September, 1885; Vol. 7, October and December, 1885. The first installment was entitled "Studies in Swedenborg's Philosophy," and the rest were "Studies in Swedenborg."
24. Vetterling was not the only person writing on the relationship between Swedenborg and Theosophy: on page 297 of *Swedenborg the Buddhist* he commented that he had seen a tract, "Swedenborg and Theosophy," printed in 1883 in Calcutta.
25. Helena Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*. For the "original position" as stated here, see Vol. II, pages 625-639.

26. Original edition published by the Theosophical Society in Colombo, Ceylon, 1881.
27. Alfred P. Sinnett, *Esoteric Buddhism*, p. 3.
28. I have seen no other reference to this organization. Herman Vetterling, however, was obsessed by the notion of an ancient and mysterious brotherhood of true believers. He alluded to this in *Swedenborg the Buddhist*, pages 25 and 26, and in the dialog which begins on page 34.
29. I have encountered nothing that would explain the source of the name Philangi Dàsa. The earliest testimony that Dàsa and Vetterling were the same seems to be a 1925 statement of John A. Whitehead, pastor of the Pittsburgh New Church just after Vetterling's ministry there. This is recorded in Blackmer's 1950 note.
30. Extensive but unsigned review of *Swedenborg the Buddhist* in *The Theosophist*, January, 1888, pp. 258-260.
31. In Swedenborg's voluminous writings there are many references to the Lost Word's being present in Greater Tartary. In *Swedenborg the Buddhist* Vetterling, on pages 46, 51, 142, 277, 290, and in the discourse of pages 300 to 307 cites the Swedish mystic's writings to this effect. Vetterling, however, was not alone in connecting Swedenborg with Hindu traditions: according to the website <http://www.esoteric.msu.edu/printable/Irwinprintable.html> 2008, "In 1886, Warren Evans, a Swedenborgian minister, published *Esoteric Christianity and Mental Therapeutics*, synthesizing his teachings with Hindu religious concepts."
- Typical passages from Swedenborg's writings are: 1) from *Coronis*, 39: "That the nations in every part of the earth have been in worship from some religion is known; and religion cannot exist except by some revelation, and by the propagation thereof from nation to nation; as may be seen in the preceding work, *The True Christian Religion* (n. 273-276); where, also, it was shown, that, prior to the Israelitish Word, there was a Word, which in process of time was lost, but from the Divine Providence of the Lord is still preserved in Great Tartary, from which is their Divine worship, even to the present day (see also n. 264-266, and n. 279, of the said work)." 2) from *Doctrine of the Sacred Scriptures* n.101 and n. 102: "I have been told by angels of heaven that there was among the ancients a Word written entirely by correspondences, but that it had been lost, and they said that it is still preserved, and is in use in that heaven where those ancient people dwell who had possessed it in this world. The ancients who still use that Word in heaven came partly from the land of Canaan and the neighboring countries, such as Syria, Mesopotamia, Arabia, Chaldea, Assyria, and Egypt, and also from Sidon, Tyre, and Nineveh.
32. Samuel Johnson, *Oriental Religions and their Relation to Universal Religion*, Vol. II, India.
33. Arthur Versluis, *American Transcendentalism and Asian Religions*. Samuel Johnson is treated on pages 253 to 265.
34. The book was favorably reviewed in *The Path*, the American Theosophical journal, of September, 1887, Vol. 2, No. 6, p. 187. Vashestov, *Swedenborg the Buddhist*, Introduction, p.

xxiii, recounts the Swedenborgian reaction. A Japanese translation was made, and by 1893 the first edition, evidently of 1,500 copies, was nearly exhausted according to *The Buddhist Ray* for July-August, 1893, Vol. 6, Nos. 7-8, p. 6. Rick Fields, *How the Swans Came to the Lake*, p. 131, misquotes the statement that the second edition would be of 1,500 copies, giving the number as 15,000, and not specifying that it refers to the Japanese edition. Vashestov repeats Fields's error.

35. Santa Cruz Daily Sentinel, November 18, 1886.

36. Blackmer, Note.

37. Swedenborg the Buddhist, p. 31.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

39. Marion Pokriots, a Santa Cruz genealogist and local historian, was researching the properties of the area known as Mount Roberta. Finding property records and two memoirs with the information I have placed in the text, Pokriots asked me if I knew what they meant. It was not hard to match her data with what I knew about Philangi Dàsa, and so the present article became possible. Her description and sources are in Marion Dale Pokriots, "Historic Mount Roberta," *The Valley Post*, Jan. 15, 2007.

40. Santa Cruz County Deeds: Vol. 51:155.

41. Genealogical information about Robert Pitcairn can be found in [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) (2008) and in [www.gencircles.com/users/sdcole/8/data/601506026](http://www.gencircles.com/users/sdcole/8/data/601506026) (2008). The life of his outstanding relative John Pitcairn Jr. and other prominent members of the latter's family are to be found in the *National Cyclopedia of American Biography*. Their New Church activities are described in <http://newchurchhistory.org> (2008). Some light on the New Church in Pittsburgh is shed by the *Autobiography of Andrew Carnegie*, Boston and Cambridge, 1920, Chapter IV (ed. used: [www.wordowner.com/Carnegie](http://www.wordowner.com/Carnegie) 2008): "A few persons in Allegheny [now part of Pittsburgh] – probably not above a hundred in all – had formed themselves into a Swedenborgian Society, in which our American relatives were prominent. My father attended that church after leaving the Presbyterian, and, of course, I was taken there."

42. *The Buddhist Ray*, Vol. III, No. 8, August 1890, p. 60.

43. According to the 1860 and 1900 U. S. Censuses Margaret was born in 1840 or 1841, but the website [www.gencircles.com/users/sdcole](http://www.gencircles.com/users/sdcole) 2008 has 1838. The website quotes the *New Church Life*, 1921:87 to the effect that Margaret and her numerous siblings were staunch members of the New Church. Blackmer's note mentions the relationship between Herman and the two Pitcairn women.

44. Santa Cruz County Deeds: Vol. 102:17.

45. 1889 Directory of San Jose City, Santa Clara, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, San Benito, Monterey Counties, McKenney Dir. Co., San Francisco.



46. The Buddhist Ray, Vol. VI, No. 5-6. May-June 1893, p. 8.
47. Ray, Vol. I, No. 1, Jan. 1888, p. 1.
48. Ray, Vol. VII, No. 5, May 1894, pp. 5-7.
49. Ray, Vol. VII, No. 5, May 1894, p.4
50. Tweed, "Occultism," pp. 255 and 256. Vashestov, Introduction to Swedenborg the Buddhist, p. xxix, asserts from his personal correspondence with a Japanese academic that Philangi Dàsa was known in Japan among Buddhists there and had some influence on them.
51. Ray, Vol. I, No. 6, June 1888, p. 44.
52. Ray, Vol. II, No. 3, March 1889, p. 20.
53. Ray, Vol. VI, No. 3-4, March-April 1893.
54. Vashestov, Introduction to Swedenborg the Buddhist, p. xxviii.
55. An outstanding exception is his account of the "blue eyed maiden" mentioned above.
56. Ray, Vol. II, No. 4, April 1889, p. 25.
57. Ray, Vol. VI, no. 1-2, Jan.-Feb. 1893, p. 8. I have not been able to find a copy in local historical collections, but I photographed it myself in 2007.
58. Ray, Vol. VII, No. 7-8, July-Aug. 1894.
59. Ray, Vol. VI, No. 5-6, May-June 1893, p. 8.
60. Vetterling is not mentioned in the often cited histories of San Jose: Eugene Sawyer, History of Santa Clara County with Biographical Sketches, Los Angeles, Historic Records Co, 1922; and Clyde Arbuckle, Clyde Arbuckle's History of San Jose, San Jose, Smith and McKay Printing Co., 1986. Nor does his name appear among those of the homeopathic physicians of San Jose in Santa Clara County and its Resources (Sunshine, fruit and flowers), San Jose Mercury Publishing and Printing Co., 1895.
61. The San Jose city directories were published by F. M. Husted from 1901 through 1909 and by Polk-Husted after that.
62. San Jose Mercury Herald, Jan. 29, 1915.
63. San Jose Mercury Herald, Sep. 6, 1931.

64. Santa Cruz News, Sep. 17, 1931. According to its website, [www.hssv.org](http://www.hssv.org) (2008), the Humane Society of Santa Clara County (now “of Silicon Valley”) was founded in 1929. The San Jose Mercury News for Jan. 18, 1951 states that it was occupying quarters on Stevens Creek Road in 1951, when it moved to its present location, 2530 Lafayette Street.

65. *Illuminate of Goerlitz*, p. 1315. On pp. 1292-1293 he explains the efficacy of homeopathy without saying that he practiced it.

66. All the references in this series are to the *Illuminate of Goerlitz* as follows:

66a p. 625; 66b p. 665; 66c p. 664; 66d p. 784; 66e pp. 820-821; 66f p.843; 66g p. 815; 66h p. 854; 66i p. 938; 66j p. 866; 66k pp. 763-782.

Still other paranormal experiences are on pages 53, 56, 639, 870-879, 904, 938, and 956. Vetterling’s conception of himself as a scientific observer is shown by the wide range of works in the *Illuminate* bibliography. History, anthropology, medicine, psychology, and popular science are found in abundance along with religion.

67. As shown by bequests in his will, he went to Leipzig, Germany in person in 1922 to attend to its 1923 publication. The title page states that the edition consisted of 50, and only 50, copies; the foreword dedicates it from “Speranza Park, East San Jose, California August 27, 1922.”

68. Readily available sources on Jacob Boehme can be found in several websites, especially those of Bruce B. Janz, <http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~janzb/boehme/home.html> (2008) and <http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~janzb/boehme/boehmebib.htm> (2008), the latter of which has a bibliography of Boehme’s works and of works about him; [www.passtheword.org/DIALOGS-FROM-THE-PAST](http://www.passtheword.org/DIALOGS-FROM-THE-PAST) (2008) has his complete texts.

69. *Swedenborg the Buddhist*, p. 38.

70. Edythe Urme, review of *The Illuminate of Gorlitz* in *Overland Monthly and Out West Magazine*, April, 1931, p. 127.

71. *Illuminate*, p. VII.

72. *Illuminate*, p. 814.

73. *Illuminate*, p. VII.

74. All the references in this series are to the *Illuminate of Goerlitz* as follows:

74a p. 1004; 74b p. 1005; 74c p. 111; 74d p. 119; 74e p. VII; 74f p. 1118.

*Italics in the quotations are Vetterling’s.*

75. Santa Cruz News, Sep. 17, 1931.
76. This information is from the San Jose Mercury Herald, Sep. 6, 1931. A search of scholarly libraries in and around Berkeley did not succeed in finding a present day collection resembling this either in name or in content.
77. Illuminate of Goerlitz, p. III. Mazdean purity is, in Zoroastrianism, the moral foundation of the universe.
78. Howard H. Brinton, *The Mystic Will: Based Upon a Study of the Philosophy of Jacob Boehme*, p. viii.
79. The authors and their works are: Ellen Conroy, *Four Great Initiations* (1928); Mervin Alleman, *A Critique of some philosophical aspects of the Mysticism of Jacob Boehme* (1932); Andrew Weeks, *Boehme: An Intellectual Biography of the Seventeenth Century Philosopher and Mystic* (1996); Kevin Fischer, *Converse in the Spirit*; William Blake, *Jacob Boehme, and the Creative Spirit* (2004). I found these works and indications of their relevancy by searching for herman vetterling jacob boehme in <http://books.google.com> (2008), but not all of them were available for consultation.
80. Carter, *Spiritual Crisis*, pp. 206-207, 263, and 265; quotation from p. 265.
81. Fields, *How the Swans Came to the Lake*, pp. 130-132, 395, and 396.
82. Tweed, *American Encounter*, pp. 58-60, 187, and 220. Tweed's article, "American Occultism," contains additional information on pp. 255-256. There is also his very brief article, "Original Ray."
83. Janz website, [.../boehmebib.htm](http://.../boehmebib.htm) (2008). In a private communication Janz explained that he had been looking for authors who could aid in analyzing Boehme's system. As even the sketchy information in the present essay shows, however, this is not what Vetterling had in mind.
84. Wilson Van Dusen, "Supreme doctrine," p. 29.
85. Vashestov, *Introduction to Swedenborg the Buddhist*, p. xxiv.

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