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Ian Alexander Moore
Loyola Marymount University, Ian.Moore@lmu.edu

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How to Read Meister Eckhart’s Poverty Sermon¹

Ian Alexander Moore
ian.moore@lmu.edu
Loyola Marymount University/St. John’s College

Abstract

This paper outlines a few strategies for reading Meister Eckhart’s famous sermon on the first beatitude (Pr. 52). It looks at the political and ecclesiastical background of Eckhart’s teaching on poverty, some ways to manage the role of paradox in his preaching, and how to navigate tensions between the spirit and the letter of his text.

Keywords

Poverty, Paradox, Hermeneutics, Pope John XXII, In agro dominico, Franciscans and Dominicans

The answer to the question of how to read Meister Eckhart’s famous sermon on poverty (Pr. 52, “Beati pauperes spiritu”) can be stated in a few words. To read this sermon properly, you must be as you were when you were not. In other words, you must be so poor in spirit that everything you take to be you, indeed everything you take to be at all, falls to the wayside. As Eckhart explains repeatedly in his homily on the first beatitude:

For a man to possess true poverty he must stand as free of his created will as he did when


he was not.²

If a man is to be poor of will, he must will and desire as little as he willed and desired when he was not.³

The poor man is not he who wants to fulfil the will of God but he who lives in such a way as to be free both of his own will and of God's will, as he was when he was not.⁴

Now that you know this, you should have no more difficulties with understanding Eckhart. Pick up and read for yourselves. If only it were so simple! If only knowledge were enough! For Eckhart also declares in his sermon that:

A man should stand as free from his own knowledge as he did when he was not.⁵

Thus, if the knowledge I have just given you is *my* knowledge, if it has become *yours*, then it is far from enough. At issue is not the transmission of information. At issue is rather an understanding which is no different from a way of life. We must live differently if we are to understand the Meister's teaching. We must be poor to understand poverty.⁶ As Eckhart states near the beginning of the sermon:

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² DW 2: 491,7–9/W: 421: *Wan, sol der mensche armuot haben gewærliche, sô sol er sînes geschaffenen willen alsô ledic stân, als er tete, dô er niht enwas.*

³ DW 2: 494,2–3/W: 422: *sol der mensche arm sîn von willen, sô muoz er als lützel wellen und begern, als er wolte und begerte, dô er niht enwas.*

⁴ DW 2: 499,1–3/W: 423: *daz sî ein arm mensche, der niht enwil ervüllen den willen gotes, mûr: daz der mensche alsô lebe, daz er alsô ledic sî beidiu sînes eigenen willen und des willen gotes, als er was, dô er niht enwas.*

⁵ DW 2: 495,3–4/W: 422: *der mensche alsô ledic sol stân sînes eigenen wizzennes, als er tete, dô er niht enwas.*

Unless you are like this truth we are about to speak of, it is not possible for you to understand me.7

And again at the end:

So long as a man is not like this truth, he cannot understand this speech, for this is an unconcealed truth which has come direct from the heart of God.8

Fortunately, Eckhart does not leave it at that. He is a preacher and a teacher; he is a Lese- und Lebemeister, a master of letters and life, as Martin Heidegger would occasionally refer to him.9

Even if Eckhart cannot force an understanding of the divine truth, let alone expound it discursively, he deploys numerous strategies for helping his readers and listeners along, as many scholars have shown.10 What I would like to do in this article is less to examine Eckhart’s own

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8 DW 2: 506,1–3/W: 425: als lange der mensche niht glich enist dirre wârheit, als lange ensol er dise rede niht verstân; wan diz ist ein unbedahtiu wârheit, diu dâ komen ist âz dem herzen gotes âne mittel.
9 Heidegger is modifying an apocryphal saying by the Meister against what would seem to be its original intention of disparaging formal education. See Martin Heidegger, Aus der Erfahrung des Denkens, ed. Hermann Heidegger (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1983), 89, and Martin Heidegger/Karl Jaspers: Briefwechsel 1920–1963, ed. Walter Biemel and Hans Saner (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1992), 181–82. The proverb can be found in Franz Pfeiffer, ed., Meister Eckhart, 3rd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck u. Ruprecht, 1914), 599,19–20: “Es spricht meister Eckehart: wêger wêre ein lebemeister denne tûsent lesmeister.” “Meister Eckhart says: a master of life would be better than a thousand masters of letters.” Heidegger may also be drawing on Die Predigten Taulers, ed. Ferdinand Vetter (Berlin: Weidmann, 1910), 196,28–31: “Lieben kinder, die grossen pfaffen und die lesmeister die tispieren weder bekentnisse merre und edeler si oder die minne. Aber wir wellen nu al hie sagen von den lebmeistern. Als wir dar komen, denne sülên wir aller dinge worheit wol sehen.” “Dear children! The great clerics and masters of letters quarrel about the question of whether knowledge or love is better and nobler. We, however, wish to speak about the masters of life here. When we get there [namely, heaven], then we shall indeed behold the truth of all things.”
strategies than to provide contemporary readers with a few strategies for reading a sermon that has been described not only as Eckhart’s “greatest,” but also as “difficult” and “shockingly bold”—a sermon that, in taking the doctrine of poverty “to the absolutely steepest, most audacious, and insurmountably highest” point, threatens to topple into “the abyss of heterodoxy.”

Eckhart's sermon on the poverty of spirit may not be the easiest place to begin, but it is, in my view, his most remarkable; it takes us right to the heart of his teaching. It is a sermon that everyone should read at least once in their life.

In what follows, I will discuss (§1) the political and ecclesiastical background of Eckhart's teaching on poverty, (§2) some ways to manage the role of paradox in his preaching, and (§3) how to navigate tensions between the spirit and the letter of his text.

§1. Historical Background

The first strategy I would like to present concerns the sermon's historical background. Poverty, especially spiritual poverty, is, to be sure, a leitmotif in the Meister’s oeuvre. Matthew 5:3, from the Sermon on the Mount, was also a part of the reading for All Saints ’Day, when Eckhart

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12 For an overview of the theme of poverty in Eckhart, which “is an essential part of his teaching, absolutely central to his work,” see Freimut Löser, “Poor Eckhart?,” Medieval Mystical Theology 21, no. 2 (2012): 193–213 (quotation on p. 209), and Freimut Löser, “Der niht enwil und niht enweiz und niht enhät’: Drei überschene Texte Meister Eckharts zur Armutslehre,” in Contemplata alis tradere: Studien zum Verhältnis von Literatur und Spiritualität, ed. Claudia Brinker, Urs Herzog, Niklaus Largier, and Paul Michel (Bern: Peter Lang, 1995), 391–439 (see especially the references on p. 394).

delivered his homily.\(^{13}\) But, if it is correct that the latter dates from the later period of Eckhart's life during his time in Cologne and was perhaps preached as a reaction to the proceedings brought against him in that city,\(^{14}\) this means that he composed it precisely at one of the high points in the controversy over the status of poverty in the medieval Church, as well as at one of the high points in a debate between two mendicant orders that had devoted themselves to a life of poverty. This was the debate between the Dominicans, to whom Eckhart belonged, and the Franciscans over whether blessedness consists most properly in an activity of the intellect or in love (that is, in an activity of the will). I will discuss each of these conflicts in turn.

First, regarding the broader controversy concerning poverty in the Church: in May 1322, five and a half years before Eckhart's death, the Franciscan general chapter in Perugia declared unanimously that Christ and the Apostles had owned no property whatsoever, whether individually or collectively. The following year, the affluent, ostentatious Avignon pope John XXII (a bloodthirsty Midas, some have thought\(^ {15}\)) condemned this notion as heretical; after all, it could well lead to the conclusion that the Church should divest itself or, if necessary, be divested of all property. The pope's edict, in the bull *Cum inter nonnullos*, was not, however, accepted without protest. The great nominalist philosopher William of Ockham, for example, in complicity with King Louis of Bavaria, went so far as to proclaim the pope's own view to be heretical—indeed not only heretical, but obstinately heretical, hence the view of someone who had, *ipso facto*, abdicated the papacy. Although, when he made this claim, Ockham was already


\(^{15}\) For the comparison to Midas, see Joel F. Harrington, *Dangerous Mystic: Meister Eckhart’s Path to the God Within* (New York: Penguin, 2018), 286. For bloodthirsty, see Dante, *Paradiso*, XXVII.58–59.
under a sort of house arrest in Avignon facing charges of heresy for other views, his
condemnation of the pope brought things to a head, making it necessary for him to flee the city
under cover of night in 1328. (Incidentally, and despite his own precarious situation, before he
left, Ockham was asked to weigh in on the suspected heresy of Eckhart's thought, which the
papal court was investigating at the time. Ockham's judgement, like the court's shortly thereafter,
was by no means favorable; on his view, Eckhart's teachings were more like those of a madman
than a magister of theology.) Poverty was not merely a spiritual or academic matter during
Eckhart's lifetime. It concerned the very life of the Church and its most devoted servants.
Eckhart's metropolitan audience, who had lived through the Great Famine the previous decade
and were now witnessing the effects of increased material prosperity, would not have taken his
comments lightly.¹⁶

Eckhart does not, to be sure, deny the utility of external poverty when pursued in
imitation of Christ. Nor is he unique in speaking of inner poverty. The great beguine mystic
Marguerite Porete, for instance, was burned at the stake in 1310, at the Place de Grève in Paris,
for promoting ideas that anticipated those of Eckhart's Middle High German sermon. In the
seventh chapter of her book *Mirror of Simple Souls* (which Eckhart may have read while living
in the same Parisian house as Porete's inquisitor in 1311–1313¹⁷), Porete writes, in Old French,

¹⁶ For more on this background to Eckhart's poverty sermon, see Ruh, *Meister Eckhart: Theologe, Prediger,
Mystiker*, 159; Flasch, *Meister Eckhart: Philosopher of Christianity*, 5–9, 50–52, 55, 237–38; and David E. Linge,
“Mysticism, Poverty and Reason in the Thought of Meister Eckhart,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*

¹⁷ For details and references to other studies on this connection, see Justine L. Trombley, “The Master and the
Mirror: The Influence of Marguerite Porete on Meister Eckhart,” *Magistra: A Journal of Women’s Spirituality in
History* 16, no. 1 (2010): 60–102. Bernard McGinn has argued in a recent article published in the pages of this
journal that Porete is a “far more likely” source for Eckhart's use of the formula “not willing, not knowing, not
having” in the poverty sermon than is Bernhard of Clairvaux, whom Eckhart nevertheless references in his use of a
similar formula in the unedited *Melter Armutspredigt*. See Löser, “Poor Eckhart!,” 207–208, and Bernard McGinn,
the following about the internal poverty of the “annihilated soul”:

And this Soul, who has become nothing, thus possesses everything, and so possesses nothing; she wills everything and she wills nothing; she knows all and she knows nothing.\(^\text{18}\)

Eckhart, however, stands out for presenting his radical teaching on poverty more directly and concisely,\(^\text{19}\) and it is staggering that he preaches the radical thought of the day, not on the margins, but at the center of the Church, as one its most prominent masters. Even though Eckhart shows little interest in subverting the authority of the Church or its institutions, an appeal to poverty beyond any distinction whatsoever, even that between God and self, is not so easily assimilable to official doctrine, nor, at a pinch, so easy to differentiate from the calls for ecclesiastical divestment. Indeed, the motto of some of Eckhart’s disciples might have well been \textit{like soul, like body}. As one Pseudo-Eckhartian text has it:

As far as the soul follows God into the desert of his Godhead, so far the body follows the bodily Christ into the desert of his willing poverty.\(^\text{20}\)

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In 1329, John XXII, apparently with no knowledge of the poverty sermon, but perhaps anticipating its reception, declared Eckhart’s teaching “the seed of evil” (*semine vitiorum*). One piece of evidence he drew on and subsequently condemned comes from the beginning of Eckhart’s sermon on the eternal life of the just (Pr. 6, on Wisdom 5:16), where the status of property is also in play:

Those who, having gone out of themselves, seek not their own in anything whatever it may be, whether great or small, who look for nothing under them nor over them nor beside them nor inside them, *not clinging to possessions* [guot, goods], honors, comfort, pleasure, advantage, nor inwardness nor holiness nor reward nor heaven, having gone out of all this, all that is theirs: from these people God has glory, and they truly glorify God and render Him what is His due.

If this is Devil’s seed, it is hard to imagine what sort of language the pope would have found for Eckhart’s homily on poverty if he had been aware of it!

The second conflict I would like to discuss concerns the character of beatitude. In his discussion of the poverty of knowing, Eckhart asks whether blessedness consists in an act of knowledge or intellect (as the Dominicans tended to argue), in an act of love (as the Franciscans tended to argue), or in both. Eckhart does not mention, however, that this was a hotly debated

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21 LW 5: 597,5–6, n. 65.
22 DW 1: 100,1–7/W: 328 (“Iusti vivent in aeternum”): *Die ir selbes alzemâle sint ûzgegangen und des irn alzemâle niht ensauochent an keinen dingen, swaz ez joch sî, noch grôz noch klein, die niht ensehent under sich noch über sich noch neben sich noch an sich, die niht enmeinet noch guot noch êre noch gemach noch lust noch nac noch innichet noch heilichet noch lôn noch himelîchîne und dis alles sint ûzgegangen, alles des irn, dirre luîte hät got êre, und die êrent got eigenliche und gebent im, daz sîn ist.* This became, in the eighth article of the Latin bull (LW 5: 598, n. 65): *Qui non intendunt res nec honores nec utilitatem nec devotionem internam nec sanctitatem nec premium nec regnum celorum, sed omnibus his renuntiaverunt, etiam quod suum est, in illis hominibus honoratur deus.* See also the ninth article, which envisions the abolition of hierarchy between God and humans in heaven.

issue, on which he had himself pronounced differently on different occasions. Indeed, in accordance with his general linguistic fluidity, one can find all three positions in Eckhart’s authentic writings:

Something possesses God, the One and oneness with God [...] to the extent that it possesses intellect or the intellectual. For the one God is intellect, and intellect is the one God [...] To rise up to the intellect, subordinating ourselves to it, is to be united with God.24

In the love that a man gives there is no duality but one and unity, and in love I am God more than I am myself. [...] That sounds strange, that man can become God in love, but so it is true in the eternal truth.25

The perfection of blessedness lies in both, knowledge and love.26

Yet, in the poverty sermon, Eckhart teaches his congregation that debates such as these, while they have their place, do not ultimately touch on the bliss we all strive to attain. To put it bluntly,

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25 DW 1: 80,1–5/W: 105 (Pr. 5a, “In hoc apparuit”): Die liebe, die ein mensch gibt, do ensind nit zeyw, me eyn und eynung, und in der liebe bin ich me got, dann ich in mir selber bin. [...] Daz heißt wunderlich, dz der mensch also mag got werden in der liebe; doch so ist es in der ewigen warheit war.
26 DW 3: 188,7–8/W: 229 (Pr. 70, “Modicum et non videbitis me”): Volbringunge der sälicheit liget an beiden: an bekantnisse und an minne.
neither St. Francis nor St. Thomas has the answer. We must instead seek to access a hidden aspect of our soul that lies deeper than all its faculties—beyond space, time, and multiplicity, as Eckhart is fond of putting it.27

§2. Paradox

In order to gesture toward such an aspect of the soul, which is none other than the very divinity itself, Eckhart not only denies the viability of traditional approaches, whether Franciscan or Dominican; he deploys a language that many of his contemporaries would have found—and in fact did find—scandalous or abhorrent. I am thinking especially of the celebrated Flemish mystic Jan van Ruusbroec, who considered the sermon’s teaching of the atemporal preexistence of the soul to be false prophecy and the broader “ancient Gnostic tenet of ‘poverty of spirit’” to be “a perversion of Gospel truths.”28 Take the following paradoxical prayer, which appears in two versions in the sermon:

Let us pray to God that we may be free of God that we may gain the truth and enjoy it eternally, there where the highest angel, the fly, and the soul are equal, there where I stood and wanted [or willed, wolte] what I was, and was what I wanted [or willed].29

27 See, for example, Prr. 12, 103, 117.
29 DW 2: 493,7–494,1/W: 422: Her umbe så biten wir got, daz wir gotes ledic werden und daz wir nemen die wârheit und gebrûchen der êwiclîche, dâ die obersten engel und diu vliege und diu sêle gleich sint in dem, dâ ich stuont und wolte, daz ich was, und was, daz ich wolte.
I pray to God to make me free of God.\(^{30}\)

A shocking prayer, by all accounts. Not only must we call it quits with God; Eckhart is, moreover, asking us to *pray* to God for this to happen. How, as readers, should we interpret such claims?

First, we should try to understand why Eckhart would preach something like liberation from God. Eckhart himself provides an explanation in the poverty sermon. It has to do with distinction, which keeps us separate from our deepest self. He tells us:

> So we say that a man should be so poor that he neither is nor has any place for God to work in. To preserve a place is to preserve distinction. [...] My essential being [*wesenlich wesen*] is above God, *taking God as the origin of creatures.*\(^{31}\)

Inasmuch as we conceive of God as in any sense separate from creatures (which the notion of origin implies), and inasmuch as we conceive of our deepest self as created, we fail to recognize that there is an aspect of us that is not just united or capable of being united with God, but is, as Eckhart puts it elsewhere, “a single oneness”—*ein einic ein*\(^{32}\)—with the deepest aspect of God himself, which Eckhart sometimes calls the Godhead or divinity at the source of the Trinity. Eckhart is not saying we simply *are* the Godhead. He is saying that this one aspect of our soul, its uncreated little spark (*vünkelin*), is indistinguishable from the divinity beyond the

\(^{30}\) DW 2: 502,6/W: 424: *Her umbe sô bite ich got, daz er mich ledic mache gotes.*


\(^{32}\) DW 1: 381,1, Pr. 22, “Ave gratia plena.”
representable and relatable God. To this limited extent, Eckhart can preach:

I [—that is to say, the divine spark of my soul—] am my own cause according to my essence, which is eternal, and not according to my becoming, which is temporal.

Therefore I [—again, not the I that was preaching seven hundred years ago nor the I that is writing or reading today—] am unborn, and according to my unborn mode I can never die. According to my unborn mode I have eternally been, am now, and shall eternally remain. That which I am by virtue of birth [—what we typically mean by the self, with its memories, desires, experiences—] must die and perish, for it is mortal, and so must perish with time. In my birth all things were born, and I was the cause of myself and all things: and if I had so willed it, I would not have been, and all things would not have been. If I were not, God [—namely, God the Creator, God the Father—] would not be either.33

(The editor of the Stuttgart critical edition interpolates inverted commas around “God” here, although none are found in the manuscripts. While helpful when one is trying to explain Eckhart’s sermon, the inverted commas are misleading to the extent that more is going on here than can be explained discursively, as I will now show.34)


Second, we should not forget that Eckhart expresses himself in the form of a prayer. One might, admittedly, chalk this up to context. Eckhart is preaching after all. Perhaps he intends to provoke his audience to pay closer attention to his explanations, which, howsoever scandalous, are not unintelligible. Yet, as I read it, Eckhart’s paradoxical prayer is more than a pedagogic hook. It aims to disrupt our reliance on agency and rational explanation. In prayer, we are not completely in control. God, to whom we are praying, must act as well, not exactly *in us*, which Eckhart argues against in his discussion of the poverty of having, but with respect to his (God’s) own distinction from our spark that fundamentally is his spark, too. We must, to be sure, let go of God. But, strange as it may sound, we must also *let God let go* of himself. Here I need to refer to a different sermon, one that nevertheless contains several parallels, sometimes verbatim, with the sermon on poverty:

So truly one and simple is this citadel [—another word for the aforementioned spark of the soul—], so mode- and power-transcending is this solitary One [*einic ein*], that neither power nor mode can gaze into it, nor even God Himself! In very truth and as God lives! God Himself never looks in there for one instant, insofar as He exists in modes and in the properties of His persons [i.e., Father, Son, Holy Ghost]. This should be well noted: this solitary One lacks all mode and property. And therefore, for God to see inside it would cost Him all His divine names and personal properties: all these He must leave outside, should He ever look in there.35

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35 DW 1: 42.6–43.9/W: 81, Pr. 2, “Intravit Iesus in quoddam castellum”: *sô rehte ein und einvaltic ist diz bürgelîn, und sô enbohen alle wise und alle krefte ist diz einic ein, daz im niemer kraft noch wise zuo geluogen mac noch got selber. Mit guoter wärheit und alsô warliche, als daz got lebet! Got selber luoget dâ niemer ûn einen ougenblik und geluogete noch nie dar în, als verre als er sich habende ist nâch wise und îf eigenschaft ûnêr personën. Dîz ist guot zu merkenne, wan diz einic ein ist sunder wise und sunder eigenschaft. Und dar umbe: sol got iemer dar în
In sum, we should try to follow and explain Eckhart’s logic as best we can. But we must also recognize that explanation alone, while it may be a start, will never get to the heart of the matter.

§3. The Spirit and the Letter: Reading Eckhart against Eckhart

We should, in fact, be wary of familiar terminology even in Eckhart’s own explanations, lest we become attached to it and take the sign for the thing itself. I am thinking of his use of the word “knowledge,” although this applies as well to words such as “want,” “cause,” and “act.” I will confine myself to the topic of knowledge. On the one hand, we read that:

To be poor in spirit, a man must be poor of all his own knowledge: not knowing anything, not God, nor creature nor himself.36

In contrast, Eckhart describes the atemporal “time” (when we “were” not) precisely in terms of self-knowledge:

When I yet stood in my first cause, I had no God and was my own cause: then I wanted [or willed, enwolte] nothing and desired nothing, for I was bare being and the knower of myself [bekennen mîn selbes] in the enjoyment of truth.37

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36 DW 2: 497,6–498,1/W: 423: Der nû arm sol sîn des geistes, der muoz arm sîn alles sînes eigenen wizzennes, daz er niht enwizze dehein dinc, weder got noch créätûre noch sich selben.
Would it not be better to say, “When I yet stood in my first cause, I was ignorant of myself, of God, and of all things”? Eckhart could, of course, have two different senses of knowledge in mind: one, a knowledge of something, which would entail distinction between knower and known and hence a multiplicity that is foreign to the first cause; the other, a higher form knowledge in which knower and known would coincide. Still, to speak of coincidence is to speak of at least two things coming together, even if these things are merely aspects or perspectives of that to which they belong. Interestingly, one of the manuscripts of the poverty sermon negates self-knowledge in the above passage:

[when I stood in my first cause I desired nothing], for I was emptied of all things and did not know myself.\(^{38}\)

I do not want to go into the details of this manuscript's history, which, although apparently intending to domesticate the letter of Eckhart's text, in this instance ends up capturing the spirit of his words on knowledge-poverty. It also accords with a better way in which to translate the famous triple negation from the poverty sermon: not as “willing nothing, knowing nothing, and having nothing,” which we find in Walshe, but as “not willing, not knowing, and not having.”\(^{39}\)

In any event, what I want to emphasize is the need to read Eckhart critically. Otherwise, we

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might believe we have understood him, when in fact we are still caught up in distinction.

Otherwise, we might believe we are spiritually poor, when in fact we are not so different from those merely materially poor “asses with no understanding of God’s truth.”

Conclusion

There are certainly many other strategies to use when reading Eckhart’s call for the abolishment of willing, knowing, and having. One might look more closely at Eckhart’s philosophical and theological sources, comparing, for instance, Aristotle’s understanding of the passive and active intellects with Eckhart’s understanding of the spark of the soul, or Thomas Aquinas’s conception of poverty as a means to apostolic success (instrumentum perfectionis) with Eckhart’s conception of poverty as an end in itself. One might home in on important themes such as the relation between Eckhart’s language and the demand for silence. One might try to learn from other authors who have creatively interpreted the poverty sermon, not only to gain a better appreciation of it, but to explore its fecund depths; here, and confining myself to the twentieth century, I am thinking of the pacifist anarchist Gustav Landauer, the post-Holocaust Jewish poet Paul Celan, the German philosopher (and erstwhile Nazi) Martin Heidegger, and the psychoanalyst and social philosopher Erich Fromm. In this article, however, I found it most

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40 DW 2: 490.8–491.1/W: 421: esel, die niht enverstânt göttlicher wârheit.
41 Summa theologiae 2.2.19.
important, first, to situate the sermon in the context of the debates over poverty raging at the
time, so that you might appreciate the radical and universal scope of Eckhart's exhortations;
second, to help you see Eckhart's shocking paradoxes both as in need of explanation and as
requiring an existential engagement—a letting-go or letting-be—beyond all explanation; and
third, to demonstrate the critical attention you must devote to Eckhart's terminology.

It has recently been claimed that Eckhart is read more than the Angelic Doctor of the
Church, St. Thomas Aquinas. Whether Eckhart is read well is of course another matter. In any
case, I hope that the three strategies I have outlined in this text will help you, at least in some
small way, to read Eckhart better.

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Schürmann's powerful reading of Eckhart as the site in which the "hegemonic fantasm" of nature is "destituted," in
44 My thanks to Fr. Michael Demkovich, Topi Heikkerö, and the other participants at the Meister Eckhart Society
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