

MEISTER ECKHART AND VOEGELIN'S MYSTIC PHILOSOPHY:

The Importance of Mystical Theology to Social Order

Copyright 2008 Macon Boczek, Ph.D.

Who is Meister Eckhart? And what did Eric Voegelin discover in his writings that he found very significant vis-a-vis the search for order in history? To put it another way, what serious deformation of modern social life did Voegelin think could have been prevented or assuaged if the mystical theology of Meister Eckhart had not been censured by the Inquisition? In his *Autobiographical Reflections* Voegelin writes, "[m]ysticism has become of considerable importance in Western history ever since the Middle Ages, when the limits of doctrinal expression of truth became visible, especially through the work of St. Thomas Aquinas".^{i [i]} Voegelin believed that the dichotomy between mystical faith and dogma, that began in the generation after Thomas Aquinas, was the source of nominalism and the derailment of reason inherent in Western intellectual history.² When dogma has separated from experience, its truth claims cannot be demonstrated or given meaning by experience. Thus the nominalism of dogma "[h]as become the publicly dominant form of the West because it was, beginning with the eighteenth century, adopted as the intellectual form of ideologizing".³ Rigid doctrinal verities then have worked to disunify societies in that they inevitably become at war with each other.

The radical distinction between nature and grace that structures the theology of St. Thomas carries the seeds of a division between faith and reason.⁴ Of course Aquinas differentiated between faith and reason for the purpose of the scholarly investigation of each, but his investigations evolved in future theological and philosophical paradigms into the complete separation of these two forms of cognition.⁵ Moreover, this division was utterly boosted through the eclipse of mystical theology by dogmatic forms of discursive theological truth.⁶ The loss of the experiential basis of that truth, which is present when mystical and systematic truth are equally recognized, thus ensued.⁷ The Voegelin corpus, with its emphasis on the function of revelation, and hence faith, in the founding of reason and of the moral capacity in human beings, has challenged this artificial division of mystical and dogmatic theology.⁸

The Enlightenment symbolizes the culmination of attempts in western intellectual history of the emerging and all encompassing philosophical goal to establish reason as an independent source of knowledge concerning divine reality.⁹ Voegelin has written repeatedly that there is one truth of reality as the ground of human order; it arises from the metaxy, in the movement of human quest and divine appeal through which humanity participates in the full community of Being. This participation is a pre-condition for the establishment of order in society.¹⁰ This one truth splintered and reproduced itself in the Enlightenment dualism of faith and reason .

Of course this is not the end of the problem. There has been a further devolution according to Voegelin of the "ignorance in the soul", and of *aspernatio rationis*, or the rejection of reason.¹¹ Voegelin also refers to "the intentionalist reduction" in which the extensive range of knowledge, rooted in metaleptic experiences, has been reduced to information gleaned from human intentional relationship to the object of knowledge. This "has worked

havoc among the plurality of meanings in which the word *being* must be used¹². There are also the gnostic mass movements that have brought the totalitarian terrors of the modern age.¹³ In sum, the great "leaps in being", the pneumatic/moral and noetic/reason differentiations of consciousness in history have been obscured in the eras of modernity and "post-modernity", under the assault of the dogmatichy which drives Western thought and politics in contemporary society.¹⁴

Voegelin wrote that in the sixteenth century, "when there were eight religious wars in France, Jean Bodin recognized that the struggle between the various theological truths on the battlefield could be appeased only by understanding the secondary importance of doctrinal truth in relation to mystical insight."¹⁵ Hence Voegelin came to the notion of the function of mysticism in times of social disorder.¹⁶ In the twentieth century, Henri Bergson presented his views on the closed and open soul and its importance to the just cohesion of societies. Voegelin has recommended his ideas on mystic consciousness as well as those of Bodin's as supremely relevant in eras of social disorder; for example, in contemporary world civilizations.¹⁷

In this paper, however, I plan to examine some important contributions about mysticism arising out of the writings of the mystical theologian, Meister Eckhart. He was a philosopher, theologian, and mystic from the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century that Voegelin has explicitly mentioned in his many references to the importance of mysticism.¹⁸ The general thesis of this paper is that the mystical discoveries into reality of Meister Eckhart, i.e., the representative truth that is recorded in his Latin and German writings, have several philosophical themes that entirely resonate with Voegelin's own studies of human order. My approach will be to describe this convergence of thematic philosophical views by demonstrating that

Eckhart's mystical theology gives an argument for, a deeper understanding of the Christological differentiation if you will of Voegelin's anthropological principle of order.¹⁹

First, Eckhart's writings on mysticism despite the hyperbola of his style will disclose a genuine mystic philosopher who gave a clarity of definition to, what I have called (for lack of another term), the common mysticism of humanity. This statement is supported by the historical fact that Eckhart addressed these sermons to both Dominican nuns and laity.²⁰

Secondly, Meister Eckhart developed an integral, mature, and very important form of mystical theology. Mystical theology, as theology, generates the cultural meanings by which the subjects of society order their social lives.²¹ It directly contributes to the opening of soul at the root of the anthropological principle of order. In Eckhart's theology we are taught that every soul can open itself to the divine, because humanity is endowed with intellect as its divine principle, and through the saving grace of the Word, it is in direct communication with God. My particular thesis is, then, that the anthropological principle in Eckhart's mystical theology becomes higher reason's ability to be the source of God's active presence in society and history through that society's subjectivity.

Moreover, mystical theology provides the experiential basis for doctrinal interpretation of revelation and as theology, aids the catholicity of the Spirit among the ordinary laity. Eckhart was quite out of sync with the religious world view of his times in his theology: he preached the necessity of the birth of the Word in the every soul, without distinguishing between clergy and lay persons.²² The official church of his era promoted the ecclesiastical functions of preaching, authoritative guidance, and sacrament in a manner that clerically owned and mediated the Spirit's guidance through dogmatic propositions.²³ In contrast Eckhart devoted his

theological investigations to the study of the deep movements of the Spirit at will among all Christians. His understandings of the apostolic role of the hierarchy in terms of service to the free movements of the Spirit were more in continuity with the early church than his peers²⁴ He defined the intellect as "the power in which the human being is informed by God"²⁵ Mystical theology as he developed it becomes vital and necessary then, to articulate, promulgate, and serve the grace of the divine endowment of the soul within all persons.

Meister Eckhart was born approximately in 1260 in the general east-central region of Germany.²⁶ His baptismal name was John. When he was eighteen he entered the Dominican novitiate in Erfurt, Germany, and eventually was sent for higher studies at the order's institute in Cologne. It is believed that one of his teachers was Albert the Great. These beginnings demonstrate that Eckhart was seen as an intelligent and promising candidate as a master, which points to his title, Meister Eckhart. He was sent to take higher studies in Paris and then returned in 1294 to become prior of his own monastery in Erfurt. Because of the separate functions of these two callings, Eckhart has always been referred to in two manners: "*lesemeister*", the famous Paris magister and high official in his order, and *lebemeister*, the popular preacher. In the first case he composed his scholastic Latin theological treatises, in the second he produced the prose of his popular German sermons. These two diverse forms of writings help explain each other, and when studied as interpretive guides to each, offer a greater clarity to his central ideas.²⁷ Both callings reflect the charism of the Dominican order: theological training was for the sake of preaching, hence the Dominican description, "the order of preachers".

The life and career of Eckhart as a *lesemeister* and *lebemeister* was long and successful. He was still working at the age of 70 years. But he in the end was caught up in the turmoil of

medieval philosophy and theology, the theological and philosophical tensions between the Franciscans and Dominicans, the Inquisition's hunt for heretics and suspicion of pagan philosophers, and more specifically the Church's decision to completely suppress the "heresy of the Free Spirit". Bernard McGinn writes that the accusations made against him in his trials for heresy only make sense within the context of the fears concerning this heresy.²⁸ However, besides the controversy over "the liberty of the Spirit" there were also battles vis-a-vis papal supremacy versus the new enlightenment of pagan philosophers' influence on theological works.

In the end, Eckhart was accused of 150 counts of heresy, and he endured an unprecedented trial for heresy in two forums: first the diocesan inquisitional commission in Cologne, and then in Avignon in the court of John XXII. He claimed he could not be a heretic because that was a matter of the will, and he would always remain loyal and obedient to the Church. Sometime during the second trial he died. John XXII, who himself had growing fears of mystical heresy, issued the papal bull, "*In Agro Dominico*" which held that 28 of the previous counts against Eckhart were suspicious, in that they could lead the uneducated into religious error. Only two counts were deemed heretical. Nonetheless, this condemnation by the pope in 1329 has "cast a shadow over his reputation that has lasted to our own time".²⁹

The development of the thesis of this paper will be as follows. I will start with a general definition of mysticism, and from there elaborate important understandings of this word. Because mysticism leads to a maturation of essential human-ness, these insights will be shown to confirm "the common mysticism of humanity". Then because mysticism is a more abstract form of cognition, a function of higher reason irreducible to common sense knowledge, mystical

theology will be defined in terms of a comprehensive discipline of guidance, an interpretative and symbolic science, and as a mapping out of first and rather blind questing steps by human beings into encounters with transcendent and revealing mystery. But in all of this I will move from general understandings of mysticism, mystical consciousness, and mystical theology to the specific insights provided in the works of Meister Eckhart.

A coalescing concept in both the Oxford Dictionary of World Religions and a traditional Catholic dictionary is that mysticism is "a special deep experience of union with and knowledge of the divine reality, freely granted by God".³⁰ The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy actually presents a similar definition but in a more beggarly language. It speaks of union through "ecstatic contemplation" and of a human "power" of spiritual access to domains of knowledge closed off to ordinary thought.³¹ The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions uses a more neutral and phenomenological language, and describes mysticism as "the practices and often systems of thought which arise from and conduce toward mystical experience".³² These systems are different from metaphysical systems, it reads, "as they are distinguished by their intimate connection to a quest for salvation, union, and liberation realized through distinct forms of spiritual, mental or physical exercise". In other words, mysticism is the direct intuition of God, and a mystic is one who has this experience according to this entry. Although, it continues, mystic experience may not be theistic as in "Theravada Buddhism".

The purpose in this paper is to work from these general definitions of mysticism to a more specific one that is a common mysticism, within the prototype of the mysticism of the specially gifted religious genius, artist, prophet, etc. Thus the mysticism of the latter is a representative truth for the sake of the former. Their work lays the foundation for mystical

theology. Secondly, my goal is to do this guided by the insights into the mysticism possible to uneducated/ordinary lay persons articulated by Meister Eckhart. There are two components common to these three definitions that will guide that effort: mysticism as experiential knowledge and union, and the work of meditation or spiritual exercise that is integral to project of mysticism. There is also a disclaimer of sorts that should be articulated before I begin the examination of these two components. It concerns non-theistic mysticism.

All three definitions point to the experience of a greater than human, transcendent, and mysterious Reality as a normative component of mysticism. Non-theistic mysticism, therefore, is derivatively rather than formally mysticism, but as mentioned in the Oxford Dictionary of Religions, it does fit under the general umbrella of the family of definitions of this word. How to explain this would be a task of mystical theology I believe, which studies not only the what, how, why of mysticism, but also its aberrations and pitfalls. The Western Church has always been wary of mysticism specifically due to the latter possibility.³³ The traditional view in the history of ascetic/spiritual theology has been that the open soul is prey to other/demonic spiritual reality in competition with the Holy Spirit. The sad story of Eckhart's reception by the hierarchical church is partially explained by this very real fear of the dangers of mysticism.

I could comment that Henri Bergson treats this subject in terms of partial and full mystical experience.³⁴ Voegelin has written that there is this possibility of incomplete mysticism also in comparing Shankara and Eckhart.³⁵ Louis Roy in his book, *Mystical Consciousness*, summarizes several writers who have analyzed a step by step process in the mystic experience in which human consciousness enters into the consciousness of God. The section devoted to the notion of "bare consciousness" seems quite relevant: this stage of consciousness represents the

empty, apophatic state prior to a final break through to mystic consciousness . It is not yet an experience of mysterious transcendence.³⁶ Mysticism as "bare consciousness" would be a quest interrupted; one settles down for whatever rewards perceived while still on the way.

It is only logical that a conversation seeking to define mystical experiential knowing and union as described in the above definitions would turn to the subject of human consciousness, and the first point to be elaborated is the relation of experience and consciousness. Ellis Sandoz has defined experience as a transaction in consciousness.³⁷ In other words, experience is the specific form of actualization of human subjectivity that is owed to consciousness. It is specifically the reflexive function of consciousness that allows experience—that aspect of consciousness in which the human being can experience him/her-self as a subject who is the source of action.³⁸ So experience is tied to action. But it is also a source of knowledge. Every experience has its moment of understanding, awareness or insight; through our experiences we grasp the meaning of things and a trust-able knowledge of reality.³⁹ The causal relation of experience and consciousness requires that mysticism be discussed in terms of consciousness. The relation of mysticism to the actualization of subjectivity, and to action and knowledge will further require an investigation into the description of mysticism as "spiritual exercise" and hence, an examination of the work of "meditation" at the heart of the mystic enterprise also must be addressed. Thus the discussion turns to the how, what, and why of mysticism.

I will begin with "the how", or the topic of the meditative ascent. There are several points to be made. First, meditation is a form of mental prayer,⁴⁰ a "pondering in the heart" that is a searching beyond itself into something that is other, mysterious, appealing. Hence, the

meditative ascent as prayer is the work of religion. This is no surprise as religion traditionally has been defined as an actualizing moral virtue of human higher rationality.⁴¹ If one cuts through all the descriptions of mystic meditation and contemplation, one comes to its fundamental spiritual components of the divine call driving the questing and unrest of the human spirit, the human response which is a yearning, searching movement to discover the hidden Goodness and Truth anticipated by the fact of this unrest, to the Divine return response of the gift of faith confirming the realness of the hidden Goodness and Truth anticipated. In turn there begins a more intense questing that at each step receives/encounters manifesting, revealing gifts of insights into what it seeks. Thus there is the phenomenon of a repetitious, earnest, spiraling ascent to the "location" engulfed in the presence of the Divine. This is the zenith of mysticism according to Theresa of Avila: one is engulfed in God "within and without."⁴² In the vocabulary of Meister Eckhart, this ascent will be portrayed as a breaking through to the "place" where human consciousness encounters and unites with divine consciousness; i.e., in the ground of the soul.

Thus this meditation is at heart both prayer and sacrifice. It is initiated, led, and guided by God; the goal is the experience of union with God. "Seek and you will find" are apt words for this meditation. The experience of it, which must reflectively be known in the work of consciousness, will develop religious interiority. I will take up a further discussion of interiority shortly, but at this juncture my point is that the blueprint of this interiority will be drawn pluralistically in the sociality of concrete religious symbols and rituals available to interpret mystic experience. One cannot overestimate the endless symbolic diversity or forms of religious practice that enters at this point. There are myriad ways that one can engage in "[t]he meditative wandering through the constants in the tensional process thus becomes luminous for a

reality beyond the tensions that cannot be attained within tensional existence⁴³. Thanks to the treasury of religious symbols, texts, sermons, and writings from talented and charismatic religious geniuses, this description of the spiritual exercises of mysticism is possible for all persons.

Several themes emphasized in Meister Eckhart's theological works and in his sermons present equivalent accounts of the above religious meditation integral to mysticism. One could also add that they picture the appeal/quest/response of the prayer as a venture of faith and reason. Philosophy and theology constituted a single cognitive project for Eckhart, in that he freely moved from one discipline to the other in the methodology of his mystical theology.⁴⁴ He firmly held that there was a convergence in the content of the truth of reality each enabled to be discovered.⁴⁵ Hence these themes speak of a mysticism that is quite in the reach of and actually the calling of every person. Eckhart understood that his ideas could have a universal application to human beings living in societies throughout the human ecumene.

One of these themes was detachment. In his writings on "detachment", Eckhart paraphrased Jesus' words to Martha, "whoever wants to be free of care and to be pure must have one thing, and that is detachment".⁴⁶ He valued detachment because he believed "that the soul has a secret entry into the divine nature when all things become nothing to it".⁴⁷ Eckhart was convinced "that the intellect is nothing but an *ad-verbum*, that is something that has no existence apart from its inherence in the Word, in the same way that the "just person" (*justis*) inheres in divine "Justice".⁴⁸ Thus the practice of mystic meditation to him would entail a sacrificial component to develop the soul's poverty of spirit. However, he advocated primarily internal acts of religious asceticism, a self-denial of radical obedience, a cutting away of all

things, as the condition of possibility for the Spirit led ascent to the presence of God in ground of the soul.⁴⁹

Eckhart's unique doctrine of analogy gives a clarification to the negative, apophatic stage that one must pass through in the quest to enter the ground of the soul where the Spirit conceives the Word. Unlike St. Thomas, Eckhart's doctrine of analogy was that of formal opposition rather than attribution. He believe that God alone possesses the divine attributes. Hence analogy is not a connective relationship as in Thomas, for Eckhart it is instead one of complete dependency.⁵⁰ Creation is thought of in terms of formal causality in his doctrine then. But the forms of things are not in God formally, but rather like the artist and his work, the ideas of things are in God causally and virtually. Created reality, including the form through which it is what it is, exists in itself not in God, so the unlikeness to God is paramount. The reality of the creature is a reality of a sign pointing to God. It is a also reality marked by complete dependency.

51

The reality of the creature as a sign and as completely dependent for its formal as well as material existence on God has implications for the meditative prayer. It is due to the formal opposition that is central to his understanding of analogy, that Eckhart adopts a radical apophaticism in that he recognizes that no human concept or word is really adequate for speaking about God. There are some things language can do, but even then, it is irreparably limited. So a meditative prayer must accept the apophatic horizon that limits all forms of knowing and speaking about the Divine. The detachment and radical obedience he preached was directed to helping his hearers have a form of intellectual ascesis, a learned ignorance, to bring about a preliminary state of unknowing, that alone can open up the final stage of

prayer—receptivity for God making himself present to us. This is a deconstruction for the sake of silent union, not for the sake of itself, or for preserving the lofty nature of God in our conversation about him then.⁵²

A second theme, derived from Eckhart's previously mentioned identification of faith and reason, is the mutuality of the two in the mystic prayer called meditation. First of all this grafting of faith to reason arises because Eckhart posits three faculties in human comprehensive rationality: sensitive, rational—directed to external objects in the world, and superior, the higher rationality that cleaves to God.⁵³ The latter is “the intellect” that joins us to God. However, due to the radical distinction between God and humans, therefore the limits of human knowing then, its exercise must be one of both faith and reason.. “This order and mutual glance between God and the height of the soul is completely natural and founded in the root and source of all good, namely order. . . . [o]n the basis of this conversation of our highest faculty which is the image of God with God and God with it, the whole book of the Song of Songs seems to be based and developed.”⁵⁴ Eckhart blurs the distinction between nature and grace in his theory of the three layered structure of human rational powers. And all philosophical and theological resources are on the table in the person's efforts at meditation---because in the end the prophet, seer, philosopher and apostle were voicing the same revelatory disclosures of God.

A final theme that provides insight into the meditative prayer for human ascent within heart and soul to the heights where lies the presence of Transcendent Mystery is Eckhart's Christological and thus, Trinitarian “metaphysics of the flow”. Eckhart's systematic work is founded on the paradigm of the dynamic receptivity of the “flowing forth” of all things from the hidden ground of God, and the return or breaking through of the universe into “essential

identity with this divine source⁵⁵. This metaphysics itself is a sketch of the nature of an image of God; thus it provides a definition of human nature. So the "metaphysics of the flow" helps to clarify our thesis that Eckhart enables a Christological /Trinitarian differentiation of the "anthropological principle". The very action of the meditation, its dynamic three-fold continuous ascending and returning movements, "the *exitus/reditus*" in the structure of the meditation, itself formally constitutes the essentiality of human nature.

Eckhart presents the mystical doctrine of "creation as *Ebullito*".⁵⁶ An image is a matter of *bullito*, an inner boiling, a formal emanation, or diffusion of the producer's pure nature. Then a second stage occurs, in the manner of efficient causality or as a final cause, in which the producer creates a boiling over, something not itself. (*Ebullito*) Unlike physical creation however, human beings with their rational (intellectual) natures receive both: God's inner and outer boiling so to speak. We are deified in our nature because we receive the Trinitarian inner boiling activity of the three divine persons in our higher reason due to our Redemption-earned union with the Son.

Thus, Eckhart held that the nature of human beings as the image of God was comprised by the intellect understood as higher reason: the "head" of the soul generating the image of God. As such the intellect, has the power to *be* all things. This ability of the intellect to be "nothing" as well as to image the whole of divinity in the *exitus-reditus* paradigm is brought into actuality through the action of the meditative prayer. The theological/ metaphysical scheme of the structure of the prayer as call, response and divine answering response, that becomes the new call as presented above, is the exact function of the higher intellect. Through this meditation human persons are able to enter into the divine movement of God's going out and return, and

participate in the mystery of the divine one-ness with its reciprocal trinity of persons. At the same time they become, are continuously becoming, the image and likeness of God which is their nature.

So Eckhart's metaphysics of the flow points to the dynamic structure which arises from participation in the simple act of religion, the prayer as it becomes a meditative quest, as a core description of what is human nature as created in the image of God. And we come to the first stage in what I have called the common mysticism of humanity. It is the reception of the grace that makes us an image of God by grafting our human *exitus-reditus* taken up into Trinitarian life. Voegelin describes this phenomenon as the human project/pilgrimage of *fides quaerens intellectum*.⁵⁷ Religion's task in mystical theology is to actualize human nature--- through the deepening or opening of our interiority, a dynamic forming of an image of God. Mysticism is a further journey within religious interiority though:⁵⁸ the mystic's soul's plenary receptive openness is able to be in "touch" or "direct contact" with God, because He responds with the gift of faith to the human quest. While the structure is Trinitarian, it is not something esoteric but open to all through the vast sociality of religious symbols. Eckhart simply reveals the Christological basis of the anthropological principle in his description of the traditional meditative ascent.

The second aspect of the dictionary definition to be explored is the portrayal of mysticism as experiential and thus as matter of a human conscious activity. We can only have experiences because we have an ability to be aware or conscious of what (actively or passively) affects us. Once again there are points to be made that clarify the "common mysticism of humanity" because human nature as a unique species is characterized by consciousness. Eckhart

understood this relation between our essential nature and that fact of consciousness. He believed that what distinguishes human nature was not only the ability to think and to make, but also essentially the ability to *know* that we think and make.⁵⁹ Centuries later, Karol Wojtyla in his phenomenology of human nature will make the same point. The biblical account of creation precisely defines humanity as imaging God because it alone, i.e., uniquely in its nature, can consciously receive the gift that is the created world from God.⁶⁰ In sum, mystical theology in general and the specific theological works of Meister Eckhart in particular, preserve a vital differentiation of consciousness---into the human capacity to be conscious.

Mystical consciousness, achieved in the prayer and sacrifice of meditative experiences of transcendent Mystery, is a differentiation of consciousness within both religious and ontological interiority. First, we should present a general definition of interiority. Generally speaking in this paper I define this term, as Lonergan does, as the self-appropriation of the inward aspect of one's own nature□□of one's own interiority, one's subjectivity, one's operations, their structure, their norms, their potentialities . . . a heightening of intentional consciousness, an intending . . . to the intending subject and his acts□.⁶¹ Lonergan of course recognized both the data of the senses and of consciousness as material for the exercise of reason. Thus he also recognized two forms of interiority: self-appropriation of our faculties to deal with the world around us as well as a self-appropriation of the mystical power to incorporate infinite Reality.⁶²

Bernard McGinn explains that like all forms of consciousness, interiority is an awareness of the object of our feeling, knowing, loving. It is the interior self presence of ourselves as agents in the activity of meditative search. Eckhart's teachings on the birth of the Word in the ground of the soul are imbued also with the motif of interiority.⁶³, both religious and ontological.

The classic understanding of religious interiority, which would be one Eckhart would have been familiar with, can be defined as an inwardness animated by the life prayer, meditation, contemplation and reflection vis-a-vis the transcendent Source of whatever being, meaning, and value the human person possesses *as a gift*.⁶⁴ (emphasis mine) As far as religious interiority is concerned, the call and response that structures the religious act brings us awareness of the *exitus/reditus* flow within our meditation. This becomes a consciousness of the co-presence of God in our inner questing acts as the transforming Other more intimate to us than ourselves.⁶⁵

Ontological interiority is a philosophical insight into actual human beingness: that "each and every being (and not just for spiritual or mental being) [there is] ontological interiority or depth . . . brought about by the principle and causes that constituted each being". Those causes were material and formal, final and efficient, leading to each being's essential and existential constitutive principles. Beyond this, ontological interiority in human beings included the awareness of the primordial Presence that remained in communicative continuity with each and every being. This was an inward consciousness that each every being was constituted by the intrinsic principles "that flow from the originating creative communication of the manifest-yet-hidden God."⁶⁶ What mysticism differentiates in ontological interiority thus defined is the horizon of our inner rational being. A "meta-consciousness" is formed, more sharply understood and realized, which brings a clarity of insight, a new form of infinite horizon, that can be described as the awareness of the ground, apex, or center of the soul.

Union of God and the soul is an apt description of this meta-consciousness.⁶⁷ A divine presence in our religious activity is experienced as if it were the divine Reality actually operative within our faith and love. There is the experience in our reason of the Transcendent Presence in

its mystic, newly realized ,unrestricted dynamism, and/or that the Infinite End, God, is in
someway present within out spiritual operations of knowing and loving. This meta-
consciousness, as a new differentiation of consciousness through mysticism, has no new content;
it is rather a heightened mental awareness and state of loving attraction permanently in place in
the soul concomitant with the consciousness of the presence of God. It is always a gift, one that
fulfils the potentiality of □natural□ human beingness. But it is a gift that is the promised
fulfilment of a hunger of nature itself, hence the ever- inherent call, which demanded the first
religious outreach in search of this gift. Therefore, meta-consciousness is within the reach of all
persons and a possibility through a common mysticism of the prayerful quest.

Meta-consciousness receives a Christological differentiation in one of the constant
themes in Meister Eckhart, which is the mysticism of the ground----the one ground of God and
human. There is a divine birth of the Word (the work of the Spirit) in this ground which can be
accessed by human consciousness in the ascesis of attuned, attentive listening of the meditative
search that receives God□s revelation of this □birth□.⁶⁸ Thus, Louis Roy characterizes
Eckhart□s mysticism as the an even greater differentiation of the Plotinus□s consciousness
beyond consciousness.⁶⁹ Mysticism□s task is provoke the breaking through into the □place□in
which human consciousness becomes divine consciousness.⁷⁰ Roy quotes McGinn in describing
this consciousness: □Our union with God is a continuous state, at least in some way . . this
continuous union with God is not an □experience: in any ordinary sense of the term□it is
coming to realize and live out of the ground of experience, or better of consciousness□.⁷¹ The
point both authors have emphasized is that mysticism is best explain by something that

essentially defines humanity, consciousness□but in a greater differentiation of this essential characteristic.

In sum, the nature of mysticism is best defined as Teresa of Avila has defined it□a consciousness of the presence of God. □Mystical consciousness is a fruitful way to conceive of the forms of special encounter with God spoken of by Christian mystics, primarily because consciousness emphasizes the entire process of human intentionality and self presence□, rather than in terms of experiential feeling which neglects the dynamic and continuous state in the comprehensive meditative search by and within the higher faculties of the soul.⁷² This reference to intentionality indicates that another way to understand meta-consciousness from the perspective of intentionality.

Although since the work of Husserl , it is quite common to speak of the intentionality of consciousness□consciousness is a consciousness *of*. Lonergan writes about the four operations of □intentional consciousness□. Roy writes our consciousness is essentially dual: we intend objects and we also consciously intend them.⁷³ However, strictly speaking, our intending of objects is the function of our operations of knowing and loving/making, i.e. intentionality *of* is proper to reason and will and we are conscious of this. So, rather than being intentional, consciousness is a mirroring or reflexive faculty that brings awareness of our intending these objects in these operations to us. The mystic topos of *epektasis*, the hunger and lack of fulfilment which makes us questing persons in our very nature, points to the more correct manner of speaking of intentionality in relationship to consciousness.⁷⁴

Consciousness has a transcendental structure, that Voegelin has also identified in his work, and which becomes apparent in Eckhart's mysticism of the Word's birth in the hidden "parts" of the soul. In other words, consciousness is intentional toward the divine ground that is the source of our continuance in being, as understood in the classic notion of ontological interiority. Thus Eckhart's understanding of mystical consciousness as the fusion of divine and human consciousness can be clarified by Voegelin's understanding that the phrase, intentionality of consciousness, really refers to "a process of participation in the In-Between of the reality of things and the divine Ground of being".⁷⁵ For Voegelin this consciousness was "the luminous center radiating the concrete order of human existence into society and history".

76

The last point leads to a concluding examination of Eckhart's theme of the "nobleman" as a further differentiation of consciousness of Voegelin's "anthropological" principle. My thesis has been that Eckhart's mystical consciousness is a Christological differentiation of this principle, hence of the historical revelations of order in the pneumatic and noetic "leaps in being" in concrete history. McGinn writes that Eckhart has a daring message about the relationship between God and the human intellect. As in the noetic differentiation, the intellect is the temple of God, for Eckhart, "nowhere does God dwell more properly".⁷⁷ But this understanding is Christological for Eckhart: "God became man, and through that all the human race has been ennobled and honored". Hence, we have in our nature everything that Christ according to his nature can attain. But as previously explained, this birth is a conception by the Spirit released at Pentecost, hence a further development pneumatically "into unrestricted moral loving. Eckhart writes that because God gives birth to his Son in the inward part of the

spirit and in the inner world of all, God's ground is the ground of human beings, and theirs is God's ground. His mysticism is about what is common to human nature.⁷⁸ Of course the nobility of our nature is for Eckhart the gift of "saving grace" at work in the *epektasis* performed by faith and reason.

In sum, what Eckhart fleshes out in his theme of the nobility of the soul that brings further differentiation to Voegelin's anthropological principle is the Christological possibilities for our nature in which God acts within our very operations of knowing, loving, making. The open soul of the anthropological principle of order is the funnel for the real presence of God in the midst of society as an effective Co-Actor in history. McGinn writes, "Because the intellect is capable of being one with all things in coming to know them, it is more than just the formal existence of some divine idea in the world—it is the very presence of God as indistinct one in his creation". God's own *exitus-reditus* takes place within the moral and rational life of the ordered subjects of society. Hence God himself can be present as the name he revealed to Moses implied: "the I Am Who I Am . . . can only mean that God reveals himself as the one who is present as the helper."⁷⁹ God himself thus becomes the Source of order through the open soul.

Moreover, Eckhart's mysticism makes a conclusive case for the anthropological principle of order. Eckhart posited the complete dependency of human nature on God for everything: existence, justice, goodness, rationality, etc. In his defense to the Inquisition he adamantly disagreed with their postulate "that man cannot be united to God". He insisted that the examiners were incorrect, "when they say that the creature is not nothing by itself, but in some kind of slight existence, as we say a drop of salt water is slight but of the sea". These views of the complete dependence of human nature upon its union with God for its own

beingness and for the operations of knowing, loving, making is an equivalent form of Plato's axiom. A final quote from Meister Eckhart made this point, "[b]ut it is true, devout, and moral of the just person, insofar as he is just, has his entire existence from God, though analogically".

80

In sum, the two forms of interiority developed through mysticism also concomitantly encapsulate Eckhart's anthropology. It is in and through religious and ontological interiority that the human being is grafted onto the Son, and with him becomes a human co-partner in the Trinitarian processions. The dynamic event is under the healing power of grace, but this induction brings about the fullness of humanity as created in God's image. The development of religious interiority derives from the unceasing movement of prayer under the influences of sacrificial intellectual ascesis. It is the unknown-knowing of the *epektasis* with the mystical search of the soul in constant, unfulfilled pursuit that carves out this interiority. Hence, the *epektasis* is a partial definition of what we are by nature—it involves nature's decisive power to think and make, but the finished description of nature is "that we can reflectively know that we think and make". The mystical differentiation of consciousness beyond consciousness, the meta-consciousness that further opens up classic "ontological interiority" is the full realization of human nature. In Eckhart's Christological mysticism, consummate interiority is "the very presence of God as Indistinct One in his creation".⁸¹ It is the replete anthropological principle.

Finally, Eckhart's Christological differentiation of the anthropological principle speaks to the incompleteness and inadequacy of onto-theology/ philosophy. In particular I am thinking of the "holy atheism" of Heidegger.⁸² A text for an introductory course I taught on Religious Studies, *Ultimate Questions*, based upon the philosophy of Heidegger and the theology of Karl

Rahner, proffered the thesis that questioning unrest itself was a defining characteristic of human nature.⁸³ The meditative prayer with its three-fold movement as described in this paper provides a definitively opposed interpretation to "questioning unrest" as encompassing the whole essentiality of nature. This latter depiction of nature actually represents a pre-redemptive exposition of it—nature as enshrouded by the dark, limited horizon formed by original sin. Josef Pieper writes that Heidegger in his "analytic of experience . . . accepted as a basic consequence [due to a Lutheran theological influence] of the post-lapsarian corruption of man's nature", the impossibility of genuine religiosity and hence, he held that we can have "no direct knowledge of God".⁸⁴

Meister Eckhart's "metaphysics of the flow", in contrast, concretizes in the meditative prayer the primordial baptism of desire that is a universal possibility to higher reason-- when the Divine response to the religious surrendering and searching love, spurned by the "call" of unrest, brings the Gift of God's presence via the mustard seed of beginning faith. The continuous meditative prayer is a sign of the healing grace that has restored nature to its proper dynamic as "imaging God", through the redemptive wonder increasingly realizing its potential in a soul in union with the Word. Thus the soul *is* in direct contact with God in its ground. Hence, religious love---understood as virtue—is the always/already, actualizing power for this prayer. Religion grants the true insight into the universal defining characteristic of human nature.

In the conclusion of this paper, I would like to briefly address the topic of mystical theology. In a sense this paper has been about mystical theology. Teresa of Avila defined mystical theology as simply the clarification of the rationality of the truth claims of God's all

engulfing presence to us.⁸⁵ So it is a science of God as in all theology, but specifically directed to the inner and hidden realization of "the co-presence of God in our inner acts . . . as the transforming Other" who is closer to us than we are to ourselves.⁸⁶ As this paper has had the thesis that mysticism is a necessary common task of all human beings simply to achieve a full maturation of human potentiality, mystical theology should then be understood as an articulation of the representative truth embodied in the spiritually gifted mystics for the sake of all. It is an important form of theology, that takes its place along with dogmatic, moral, and sacramental theology. But it does have that distinctive task that Voegelin ascribed to it: to restore the experiences that give meaning to dogma, moral norms and/or sacramental rituals. It does this through instruction about the relation of the unknown God and the soul.

One can gain insight into the constitutive principles of mystical theology by making a comparison of it to other forms of theology which are more conceptual, logical, and systematic. Because its subject matter is the radically unknowable Deity in his immediate presence to consciousness, and unsuitable for argued account, mystical theology involves a different form of cognitive enterprise. This theology articulates something of God on the basis of our inner reception of divine presence, as well as through a knowledge arising from the gift of God's love. Hence it does not engage in rational, reflective knowledge like other forms of theology. Mystical theology employs processes to tap into the pre-reflective level of higher reason in which it is hard to distinguish knowing and loving.⁸⁷ Because it explores God's co-presence in our knowing and loving it is, as Eckhart characterized it, more of an unknowing or learned ignorance. God's unknowable infinity is welcomed to work its transcendence within the human mind.

McGinn writes, "in every love by which a person is carried into God, knowledge enters in, although it does not know the essence that it loves". There is thus a coincidence of knowledge and ignorance.⁸⁸ Mystical theology thus deals in a knowledge and love that parallels our ratio in other forms of theology, i.e., uses the same faculties, but its conclusions are due to the divine movement from within, not from some kind of sense perception from without.⁸⁹

There is much originality to Eckhart's mystical theology. McGinn repeatedly depicts his prose, especially in the German vernacular sermons, as daring. Because they are relevant to my thesis, I will briefly summarize three special characteristics of this theology. First, as related above, this theology was directed to the laity in equal proportion to the theological community. Primarily Eckhart preached to nuns and beguines but his sermons were presented openly to congregations in the churches, thus the content of them was generally available. In fact, his uncensored advocacy of mystical theology coupled with the growing hierarchical fear of mystical heresy are the prime reasons he was targeted by Inquisition.⁹⁰

Secondly, Eckhart's theological method really did not fit the scholastic mode of his era. It is true that his use of non-Christian philosophers as sources was popular in the era's theological schools. But the *sui generis* mark of his method is that he makes use of his sources indiscriminately; he held them as of equal value. Thus, philosophy and theology are not distinguished in this mystical theology. Rather, Eckhart usually attempted to explain his mystical teachings through the natural arguments of the philosophers.⁹¹ Hence it was not unusual for Eckhart to reference a pagan, Jewish, Christian and even a Muslim authority for his arguments: "it befits his view of the identity of philosophy and theology". Philosophy affirmed

the divine nature of human beings in a critical correlation to biblical texts depicting nature as God's image.

Finally, Eckhart's mystical theology was in large part a scriptural exegesis making use of ecumenical resources. Because Eckhart does not make a clear distinction between the natural and supernatural, grace is saving or healing of "divine" nature in his synthesis, there is no counterpart to the supreme "sacred doctrine" of Aquinas in his theology. He wrote that Moses, Christ, and the philosopher all taught the same thing only in different ways.⁹² Eckhart's theoretical efforts were directed towards the discovery of the "hidden, spiritual meanings" in scripture behind the evident sense of the texts he analyzed. He looked for and made use of "mystical meanings" and "the parable" in a theological method basically true to medieval forms of scriptural exegesis. Hence in his mystical theology he often lists his many insights into the inner meaning of scripture in terms of theological, natural or moral truths. In contrast to the dogmatic theology of Aquinas and the schools, he is not attempting to prove or establish theological truth systematically. He does not use scripture for the sake of proof, but he would preach on it. His theology demonstrates agreement between the parabolical scripture texts and truths demonstrated elsewhere⁹³, hence it renders profoundly deeper insights into mystical truth.

To conclude I would like to refer to Voegelin's comment quoted in the first part of this paper concerning the role of mysticism in conveying the fullness of human experiences of divine Mystery to dogma. Eckhart's mystical theology was intended exactly in this way. It was not a system. He wanted to transform or overturn ordinary limited forms of consciousness through the process of making the deep hidden metaphors and parables of scripture the property of each listener's everyday life. In this way he could re-unite the soul's deeper experiences of God and the generated symbols (mainly scriptural for Eckhart) for future dissemination. Voegelin's experience/ symbol re-become a unit with the help of Eckhart's mystical theology, to preserve in Voegelin fashion the unfathomable meanings theology is meant to convey. All forms of theology are served by mystical theology. It is another paper, but one could examine the casuistry of moral theology or the vacuous ritual legalism of sacramental theology in western Christian history, and argue for the need for mystical theology in these situations also. If theology is to mediate between a cultural matrix and the clarification of cognition by faith so important to order in society then, restoration of mystical theology is indeed an urgent project.

i [i] .Eric Voegelin, *Autobiographical Reflections*, edited with an Introduction by Ellis Sandoz, (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), p. 113.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

4. Hence, a dictionary of theology would define "natural" theology as "the discipline dealing with knowledge of God available through reason alone . . . developed by St. Thomas Aquinas".

Nature in St. Thomas has the autonomy of something developing and acting according to its own essential characteristics, with humans, nature is "that which belongs to humans as humans [in contrast to grace] as that which comes to us through God's redeeming activity in Christ". See Gerald O'Collins, S.J. and Edward G. Farrugia, S.J., *A Concise Dictionary of Theology* (New York and Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1991), pp. 153-54.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 210.

6. Thus by the mid-16th century, the Council of Trent considered the need for reform entirely in terms of doctrinal clarification and church discipline. *Ibid.*, p. 259.

7. See above, notes 1-3.

8. Of course this is the basic theme in the five volume *Order and History*. The specific differentiation through divine revelation of the human moral capacity is detailed in *Israel and Revelation* and of reason in the history of Greek philosophy in *The World of the Polis* and *Plato and Aristotle*. These volumes are now numbers 14-18 in the Collected Works.

9. Eric Voegelin, "The Beginning and the Beyond", in *What Is History? And Other Late Unpublished Writings: CW 28*. Edited with An Introduction by Thomas A. Hollweck and Paul Caringella (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), p. 194. For example, there are the writings of Lord Edward Herbert of Chabury (1583-1648), "the father of Deism" who identified five common notions of "natural religion". See J. Samuel Preus, *Explaining Religion: Criticism and Theory from Bodin to Freud* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987), pp. 23-39.

10. "The experience in the Metaxy is the source of our insights concerning the partners [in the full community of being] to the encounter, as well as concerning the encounter itself", pp. 178.

□The truth is one, but the language in which the truth becomes articulated is not always the same□, p. 176. A very good summary of this important Voegelin theme is in his Aquinas lectures from which these quotes are taken, see □The Beginning and the Beyond□, pp. 173-232.

11.*Ibid.*, p. 203.

12.*Ibid.*, pp. 206-09.

13.Voegelin discusses political gnosticism at length in *The New Science of Politics*, which is reprinted in *Modernity without Restraint, CW 5*, edited with An Introduction by Manfred Henningsen (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 2000), pp. 175-241. See also *Science, Politics and Gnosticism* in that same volume, pp. 241-313.

14.Mircea Eliade has written that this cultural devolution away from the great □leaps in being□ in history has been caused by a suppression of the soul through an annihilated capacity to live religion consciously, that the □non-religion [resulting from the secularism of modernity/postmodernity] is equivalent to a new □fall of man□. Humans no longer possess the ability to □rediscover the traces of God that are visible in the world□ (or that can be found in the depths of consciousness also). Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, translated by William R. Trask (San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt Brace Javanovich, Publishers, 1957), p. 213.

15.*Autobiographical Reflections*, p. 113.

16.Very early in his career Voegelin recognized □the role of mystical thought in the creation of social order□, hence his interest in Othmar Spann who had written a book on Meister Eckhart. *The Theory of Governance and Other Miscellaneous Papers: 1921-1938, CW 32*, translated from the German by Sue Bollans, et al; edited with an Introduction by William Petropulos and Gilbert Weiss (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 2003), p. 3.

17.*Ibid.*, pp. 113-14.

18.Or as Sandoz and Hollweck write in their introduction to Voegelin's *History of Political Ideas*,
"Voegelin's kinship with and attraction to these great [mystical---including Eckhart] masters is
evident in his treatment of them". *History of Political Ideas, CW 19* (Columbia and London:
University of Missouri Press, 1997), p. 35.

19. Voegelin draws his "anthropological principle" from Plato—"a polis is man writ large".
Order in every society reflects the type of men of whom it is composed. The society composed of
a large segment of persons graced with the "open soul", with insight into knowledge of the
Ineffable that comes from the "common mysticism possible to all", is essential for preserving the
noetic and pneumatic differentiations of consciousness concomitant with advances in the just
ordering of societies in history. This is because Voegelin rejects such constructions as a collective
consciousness—rather there is the process in which concrete persons with the concrete
consciousnesses of "open souls" attract the social fields which grow into ordered societies. See
Eric Voegelin, *New Science of Politics in Modernity without Restraint, CW 5*, edited with an
Introduction by Manfred Henningsen (Columbia and London, 1000), pp. 136-188; and Eric
Voegelin, *Anamnesis*, translated and edited by Gerhart Niemeyer (Columbia and London, University
of Missouri Press, 1978), pp. 195-202.

20."Dominicans like Eckhart served the northern European townfolk . . . Meister Eckhart's place
in the history of Western Christian mysticism is tied to the profound and often startling homilies he
preached both to religious and to laity". Bernard McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister
Eckhart* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2001), p. 29.

21.Voegelin wrote in his response to Altizer that "the development of the nominalist and fideist
conceptions of Christianity is a cultural disaster" because the spiritual unity of the creed is
destroyed. Verbal formulations thus lose all meaning. See "Conversations with Voegelin" in *The
Drama of Humanity and Other Miscellaneous Papers: 1939-1985, CW 33*, edited with an
Introduction by William Petropoulos and Gilbert Weiss (Columbia and London: University of Missouri
Press, 2004), p. 340.

22.McGinn, *Mystical Thought*, p. 70.

23. For example, Gary Macy in his Santa Clara Lecture 2007 has helped explained the "ownership" of the Spirit by the hierarchy in his study of the history of ordination. A canon from the minor Council of Benevento in 1091 took on a life of its own by a *sententia* from the School of Laon in the early twelfth century: "The presbyterate and diaconate only are called sacred orders, because the Spirit is given only in them and therefore under no necessity ought they be received by inferiors, but others are possible as the apostle can be read". See footnote # 30, p. 15: Gary Macy, "Diversity as Tradition: Why the Future of Christianity is Looking More Like Its Past", Santa Clara University: Santa Clara Lectures, p. 15. I will take this topic up in further detail in the section of my outline that provides some history of Eckhart's career.

24. There was then the historical developing sense of the ownership of the Spirit by the hierarchy without the concomitant exigency to confer the Spirit to each newly baptized as portrayed in Acts; see Acts 14:4-17 in which the Peter and John are sent for to confer the Spirit on the newly baptized Samaritans; and Acts 10:44-48, in which Peter followed the movement of the Spirit and gave baptism to Gentiles. In both situations the gift of the Spirit to the apostles is viewed as a call to serve the Spirit whenever and wherever it freely moves. As Luke Timothy Johnson in the *Sacra Pagina series, The Acts of the Apostles* writes, this book is the "book of the Holy Spirit". "The work of the Holy Spirit in history is not confined by the precedents established by human perception". Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles, Sacra Pagina*, Daniel J. Harrington, S.J., editor (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), pp. 14,16. Eckhart's preaching can be situated in this latter and older tradition.

25. McGinn, *Mystical Thought*, p. 4.

26. The summary of the life of Meister Eckhart is taken from McGinn, *Mystical Thought*, pp. 1-19.

27. "The first principle . . . is that Eckhart cannot be understood without paying equal attention to both the Latin and German works". *Meister Eckhart: The Essential Sermons, Commentaries*,

Treatises and Defense, Translation and Introduction by Edmund Colledge and Bernard McGinn; Preface by Huston Smith (New York, Ramsey, Toronto: Paulist Press, 1981), p. 25.

28. McGinn, *Mystical Thought*, p. 14.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

30. *A Concise Dictionary of Theology*, edited by O. Collins and Farrugia, p. 152; *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of World Religions*, edited by John Bowker (Oxford University Press, 2000, 2005), p. 395.

31. *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, edited by Simon Blackburn (Oxford University Press, 1994, 1996), p. 259.

32. *Oxford Dictionary of World Religions*, p. 395.

33. Fear of mysticism and its possible dangers for ordinary Catholics was a central factor in the inquisitional sanctioning of his works. See McGinn, *Mystical Thought*, pp. 9, 18.

34. Henri Bergson, *Two Sources of Religion and Morality*, translated by R. Ashley Audra and Cloudesley Brereton with the assistance of W. Horsfall Carter (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977), pp. 222-227.

35. "The masterful study of Shankara and Eckhart by Rudolf Otto . . . shows the . . . fundamental difference between these two thinkers: To the Hindu thinker, the world is a delusion, to Eckhart it is the one and only world in which God has created it becomes incarnate. The Brahmic breakthrough which does not quite reach its goal [is] . . . a truth of existence which in its differentiation, stops short of the theophanic event that constitutes epochal consciousness." Eric Voegelin, *The Ecumenic Age* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1974), p. 321.

36. Louis Roy, *Mystical Consciousness*, pp. 46-49.

37. Ellis Sandoz, "Introduction" in Eric Voegelin, *Published Essays: 1966-1985, Collected Works, 12*, edited with An Introduction by Ellis Sandoz (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana University Press, 1990), p. xx.

38. Karol Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*, translated by Andrzej Potocki, (Dordrecht, Holland, Boston: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1979), p. 46.

39. *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 10.

40. *Oxford Dictionary of World Religions*, p. 370.

41. Prayer of course is a primary act of religion; the two defining acts of religion are prayer and sacrifice. I am referring to the classic definition of religion in Cicero and Aquinas. I am also using a tradition Thomistic understanding of virtue in terms of potency, form, act. Virtue is midway between power and operation; it perfects a potentiality in us, (*hexis*) enabling us to perform a specific good operation. *Summa*, 1a, 2ae, 55, 1.

42. Bernard McGinn, "Mystical Consciousness: A Modest Proposal", *Spiritus* 8 (2008), p. 45.

43. Eric Voegelin, *Order and History V: In Search of Order, CW 18*, edited with An Introduction by Ellis Sandoz (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 2000), p. 123.

44. McGinn, *Mystical Thought*, p. 167; *Meister Eckhart*, pp. 26-29.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

46. "On Detachment" in *Meister Eckhart*, p. 285.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 292.

48. McGinn, *Mystical Thought*, p. 11.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

50.*Ibid.*, p. 92.

51.*Ibid.*, p. 104.

52.McGinn writes that "the Dominican"s reasons for questioning traditional ways of speaking about God were different from those of modern philosophers and thinkers". McGinn, *Mystical Theology*, p. 94. He is not doing "onto-theology"; his very Christological goal is that of leading others to the fullness of human nature that comes with the birth of the Word in the soul.

53."The Book of the Parables of Genesis", in *Meister Eckhart*, pp. 108-11.

54.*Ibid.*, p. 110.

55.McGinn, *Mystical Thought.*, p. 71.

56.*Ibid.* This paragraph summarizes pp. 100-106.

57.Sandoz, "Introduction", *CW 12*, p. xvi.

58.McGinn, "A Modest Proposal", p. 49.

59.McGinn, *Mystical Thought*, p. 77.

60.Kenneth L. Schmitz, *At the Center of the Human Drama: The Philosophical Anthropology of Karol Wojtyla/Pope John Paul II* (Washington, D.C. : The Catholic University Press, 1993), n. 4, pp. 94-95.

61.Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: The Seabury Press, 1972), p. 83.

62.Louis Roy,O. P., *Mystical Consciousness: Western Perspectives and Dialogue with Japanese Thinkers* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), p. 43.

63.McGinn, *Mystical Theology*, p. 57.

64. Kenneth L. Schmitz, "Modernity Meets Tradition: The Philosophical Originality of Karol Wojtyla", *Crisis* 12 (April, 1994), p. 36.

65. This is wonderfully described by Max Scheler. "Love stirred within us. At first we thought it our love—love of God—our love of him. We came to know it for his love—the love of God. His love of us. Max Scheler, *On the Eternal in Man*, trans by Bernard Noble (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1960), p. 65.

66. Schmitz, "Modernity Meets Tradition", p. 34.

67. This paragraph summarizes the description of "meta-consciousness" in McGinn, "A Modest Proposal", pp. 47-48.

68. McGinn, *Mystical Thought*, pp. 53-70.

69. Louis Roy writes that Eckhart's mysticism is a Christological version of neo-Platonism. His originality lies in his claim that human consciousness becomes divine consciousness. Roy, O.P., *Mystical Consciousness*, pp. 93-94.

70. On the Chapter on mysticism as a consciousness "beyond consciousness", see Roy, *Mystical Consciousness*, pp. 55-70; on Eckhart's mysticism as the one ground of God and the human, see, pp. 71-94.

71. Roy, O.P., p. 77.

72. McGinn, "A Modest Proposal", p. 46.

73. Roy, *Mystical Consciousness*, p. 32.

74. McGinn, *Mystical Thought*, p. 58.

75. Ellis Sandoz, *The Voegelin Revolution*, with a new preface and epilogue by the author & with a new foreword by Michael Henry (New Brunswick, USA & London, UK: Transaction Publishers, 2000), p. 179.

76. *The Beginning and the Beyond*, edited by Fred Lawrence (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984), p. 37.

77. McGinn, *Mystical Thought*, p. 5.

78. □ Sermon 5b □, pp. 182-183.

79. Eric Voegelin, *Order and History I: Israel and Revelation* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1956), p. 413.

80. McGinn, *Mystical Thought*, p. 15.

81. *Ibid.*, p. 108.

82. Laurence Paul Hemming, *Heidegger's Atheism: The Refusal of a Theological Voice* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002). See summary, pp. 278-290.

83. Clyde R. Crews, *Ultimate Questions: A Theological Primer* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1986), p. 11.

84. Josef Pieper, *For the Love of Wisdom: Essays on the Nature of Philosophy*, edited by Berthold Wald and translated by Roger Wasserman (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), p. 11.

85. McGinn, □ A Modest Proposal □, p. 46.

86. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

87. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

88. □ A modest Proposal □, p. 55.

89.*Ibid.*, p. 58.

90.McGinn, *Mystical Thought*, p. 14-17.

91.*Ibid.*, p. 21.

92.*Meister Eckhart*, p. 27.

93.*Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.