



## The Complete Mystical Works

*Meister Eckhart , Maurice O'C. Walshe (Translator) , Bernard McGinn (Introduction)*

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**The Complete Mystical Works** Meister Eckhart , Maurice O'C. Walshe (Translator) , Bernard McGinn (Introduction)

Meister Eckhart's complete mystical teachings together in one volume, for the first time! With a foreword by leading Eckhart scholar Bernard McGinn, and the elegant translation of Maurice O'C Walshe, this comprehensive and authoritative work is a treasure for every serious spiritual seeker, and the finest volume on Eckhart ever to appear in English.

In contrast to the Latin works that convey his thought in precise and analytic detail, Eckhart's German works ponder the relationship with the divine intuitively. The sermons spoken in vernacular and transcribed and translated here, express the personal, mystical aspects of Eckhart's beliefs. The treatises and other works elaborate on the same themes and are drawn from both his spoken and written work. This treasury is the authoritative volume of Eckhart's enduring legacy to Christianity.

Reviews and endorsements

"Meister Eckhart is an encouragement to believers and unbelievers alike."

—Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, London

## The Complete Mystical Works Details

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# From Reader Review The Complete Mystical Works for online ebook

## Robin Friedman says

### A Gift Of Eckhart

The best way of learning about any thinker, even the most difficult, is by starting at the beginning and reading. This is particularly true of the writings of the philosopher and mystic, Meister Eckhart (1260- 1327), a Dominican theologian. There is a great deal written about Eckhart from widely varying perspectives from Christian to Buddhist, existentialist, idealist and many more. Rather than begin with introductions which are difficult in their own right, I suggest starting with Eckhart's own teachings and trying to respond directly to them. Eckhart wrote scholastic treatises in Latin and a variety of writings in his vernacular language, German. The latter writings are far more accessible and are included in the volume under review.

A spiritual treasure, this book, "The Complete Mystical Writings of Meister Eckhart", is the most comprehensive single volume in English available of Eckhart's German writings. Initially published in three volumes in the 1979 and 1987, the translations are by Maurice O'C Walshe (1911 - 1998). Walshe was a professor of Medieval Germanic Languages and Literature in England. In 1951, Walshe became a Theravada Buddhist and was active in Buddhism for the remainder of his life. He is probably best-known for his translation of an important and lengthy Buddhist Scripture, the "Long Discourses of the Buddha." The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Digha Nikaya (Teachings of the Buddha) Walshe's translation of Eckhart's sermons is marked by the same simplicity that characterizes his translation of the Buddhist suttas. The writing is clear and unstilted. Footnotes are short and kept to a minimum. The book has been reprinted and published in a beautiful edition of 600 pages by Crossroad Publishing Company of Herder & Herder.

Most of the book consists of sermons. The texts of the sermons are transcriptions made during Eckhart's delivery by a member of his audience. The transcriptions may have been subsequently reviewed and edited by Eckhart. The Meister's audience most often consisted of nuns or other women in the religious life. Each sermon begins with a Scriptural text which Eckhart expounds freely and allegorically rather than literally. In studying the sermons, it is important to remember that Eckhart delivered them orally and that his audience tended to be women religious.

The book includes 98 Eckhart sermons. At the time of Walshe's translations, this was the complete group of sermons that had been deemed authentic in the definitive German edition prepared by a great Eckhart scholar, Joseph Quint (1898 - 1976). After Quint's death, other scholars determined that additional sermons also were Eckhart's and added them to the canon. The fluidity in the works determined to be authentic should not concern the reader as there is much in this book to be absorbed. In addition to the sermons, the book includes translations of Eckhart treatises, "The Talks of Instruction", the famous "Book of Divine Comfort", "The Nobleman" and, another famous treatise, "On Detachment". A final section of the book includes short legends about Eckhart and a brief document purporting to capture the Meister's final words to his disciples. Walshe's own lucidly written prefaces to the initial volumes are included, and there is a short Foreword by the noted Eckhart scholar Bernard McGinn. The volume also includes a list of 29 teachings of Eckhart that were deemed heretical in a Bull of Pope John XXII dated March 27, 1329. By that time, Eckhart had already died.

Many readers find parallels between Eckhart's thought and Buddhism. But a brief introductory review of the

book, or an initial reading of the text, is not the place to press any particular interpretation. The sermons can appear to be dizzyingly abstract, perhaps especially because Eckhart's language is often highly concrete. His style is often aphoristic and quotable. It is also deliberately difficult and full of paradox. Eckhart wanted to jar his hearers out of common paths of thinking to allow them to understand anew and for themselves. Eckhart also wanted to show the poverty of language in attaining religious insight. Most readers find a nondualistic character in Eckhart's thought. He wanted to lead those attending to his sermons away from a dualism between a Transcendent God and an immanent world. Instead, Eckhart suggests that God is in the heart of every person and being. The Divine nature overflows and is all-encompassing. It requires receptiveness and the pushing away of the bounds of sense perception to see the unity between divine nature and the human spirit or "soul". Eckhart tends to use an approach that starts with God and the divine and works down, so to speak, rather than starting with individual persons and the efforts of man to try to understand God or transcendence from the outside. His teachings emphasize egolessness, immediacy, and detachment, which are sometimes summed up in the phrase "living without a why." Readers of Eckhart will find their own way with the texts before beginning with commentaries and interpretations.

The sermons and other writings explore many of the same themes throughout, but they each put them in different ways. For those with little prior familiarity with Eckhart, it is best to work through the text in its entirety. The text should be read slowly and carefully with only a little at each sitting. It should not be forced.

Eckhart's sermons have proved to be a gift to me and to many other readers. I am grateful to Crossroads Press for allowing me to review this volume. Crossroads Press has likewise given a gift to those readers wanting to engage with Eckhart in these translations by Maurice Walshe.

Robin Friedman

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### **Justin says**

Finally finished. I am working on a thesis this spring, and this collection has been immeasurably helpful in collecting both treatises and sermons. An incredible mind and incredible approach to esoteric theology in an age when to do so was heresy. If you've got the interest, this collection is worth it!

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### **Daniel Prasetyo says**

This edition is the most complete of German (vernacular) works of Eckhart, if you only buy one book contains the original works of him, this is the book! Translated by Maurice O'C. Walshe, with new editing by Bernard McGinn, one of Eckhart foremost interpreters. This book contain all of his 97 German sermons, and 5 of his famous treatise:

1. The Talks of Instruction.
2. The Book of Divine Comfort.
3. The Nobleman.
4. On Detachment.
5. Fragment of an Unknown Sermon.

One of the great part of this book is his short biography, background and his heretical defence.

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### **Phil Calandra says**

This book is so spiritually uplifting that it would be hard to give it less than a five star rating; however, the theology of Meister Eckhart is not easy and can be very perplexing. Meister Eckhart states that all creatures, including man, gain their being from "God" and without that spark from "God" man would be non-existent and would be described as "nothing". Meister Eckhart also remarks that part of the human soul is uncreated and that, although "God" is in all things, the human soul is the natural image of "God". I would highly recommend this inspirational but challenging

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### **Peter says**

Good intro in the beginning and selections of his Latin and German sermons. Some good material for my research paper.

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### **Carol says**

This is an extremely thoughtful and well researched study of Meister Eckhart's sermons, but it is very slow and difficult reading. The excitement one finds in Eckhart himself is not available in this text except through very careful digging.

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