

Letting Go To Become Whole, Celebrating The Love-Sorrow Theopoetics Through the Mystical Path of Meister Eckhart in the Song “I Love You But I’m Letting Go” by Pamungkas

Josua Estomihi Butarbutar

Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Email : estomihij@gmail.com

August Corneles Tamawiwy

A.C.Tamawiwy@sms.ed.ac.uk

The University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

Received: 16 Januari 2026 Revised: 16 Januari 2026 Published: 30 April 2026

Abstract

This article explores the concept of radical letting go (*Gelassenheit*) as a path to self-wholeness, integrating the mysticism of Meister Eckhart and the theopoetics proposed by John D. Caputo, using the song —I Love You But I'm Letting Go (Pamungkas) as a case study. Letting go—whether in human relationships, images of God, or the ego—is analyzed as an act of liberating faith, where love-sorrow—simultaneously wound and love—becomes the sacred space for divine birth. Through radical hermeneutics, the study reveals: Detachment (*Abgeschiedenheit*) and the emptiness of the soul are prerequisites for union with the Divine (*Grunt/ground*). Pamungkas' song reflects *creatio ex profundis*—the birth of meaning from chaos (*tehom*), critiquing *creatio ex nihilo*. Additionally, trauma and wounds are not failures, but living witnesses that shape true identity and open space for —the impossible. Finally, —letting go is a contemporary liturgy celebrating fragility, responding to the divine —insistence that within the uncertain events. In conclusion, the theopoetics of this song offer a paradox where wholeness is achieved precisely through total release—even from images of God and self—allowing humans to become a —home for the Divine that celebrates life in freedom, fragility, and wholeness.

Keywords: Theopoetics, Radical Hermeneutics, Mysticism, Love-sorrow.

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengeksplorasi konsep pelepasan radikal (*Gelassenheit*) sebagai jalan menuju keutuhan diri yang memadukan mistisisme Meister Eckhart dan teopoetika yang digagas oleh John D. Caputo, dengan lagu “I Love You But I'm Letting Go” (Pamungkas) sebagai studi kasus. Pelepasan—baik dalam relasi manusiawi, gambaran tentang Tuhan, maupun ego—dianalisis sebagai tindakan iman yang membebaskan, di mana duka-cinta—luka sekaligus

cinta menjadi ruang suci untuk kelahiran ilahi. Melalui pendekatan hermeneutik radikal, penelitian mengungkap bahwa: Detasemen (*Abgeschiedenheit*) dan kekosongan jiwa merupakan prasyarat bagi penyatuan dengan Yang Ilahi (*Grunt/ground*). Lalu, lagu Pamungkas merefleksikan dinamika *creatio ex profundis*—kelahiran makna dari chaos (*tehom*), selaras dengan kritik Caputo terhadap *creatio ex nihilo*. Kemudian, trauma dan luka bukan kegagalan, melainkan saksi hidup yang membentuk identitas sejati dan membuka ruang bagi —yang mustahill (*the impossible*). Akhirnya, tindakan —melepaskan adalah liturgi kontemporer yang merayakan kerapuhan, sekaligus respons atas —insistensill Tuhan yang bekerja dalam ketidakpastian sebuah peristiwa (*event*). Kesimpulannya, teopoetika lagu ini menawarkan paradoks di mana keutuhan dicapai justru melalui pelepasan total—bahkan dari gambaran Tuhan dan diri sendiri—sehingga manusia menjadi —rumahll bagi Yang Ilahi yang merayakan hidup dalam kebebasan, kerapuhan, dan keutuhan.

Kata Kunci: Teopoetika, Hermeneutik Radikal, Misticisme, Duka-Cinta.

1. Introduction

Love, a complex life matter, is the core that drives every individual to strive. Love transforms liminal spaces into a unified whole. Each individual's way of loving is unique, helping them live with different attachment styles and challenges.¹ Just as the experience of falling in love is a dynamic of desire, sensation, affection, even fantasy—whether conscious or unconscious—it also modifies the entire self of the individual. This manifests as an unconquerable tendency to make the chosen one the source of all satisfaction and happiness, and the driving force of life's energy.²

Similarly, in the dynamics of love for God, whom humanity has long fallen in love with, living in the paradox of falling (sorrow) and love. Meister Eckhart views love for God as the unity between humans and God. Even further, between creation and the Creator. For the One becomes everything. The singular image fulfilling our longing; *atopos*, unclassifiable.³

John D. Caputo's —weak theology⁴ challenges God's omnipotence, offering a concept of the —weak force of Godll—a non -interventionist manifesting unconditionality.⁵ This weak force is a promise without guarantee, a call without coercion, a radical —yesll echoing in suffering. This resonates Meister Eckhart's *Gelassenheit*⁶ (releasement), a courageous letting go of God's image to experience divine presence in fragility.⁷ Caputo offers the concept of God's —insistencell (not existence)—a formless urging that becomes real through human response, the name for the chance of the event, a radical —perhaps.⁸ Rooted in Eckhart's

¹ See, Aurellia Sapphire, *Avoidant vs. Anxious: Bertahan Atau Lepaskan*, 1st ed. (mediakita, 2025); Redaksi SuaraKita.org, —Revolusi Cinta: Attachment Style Dan Transformasi _Aku-Dia' Menjadi _Kita' Bagi LGBTQ+ Di Era Digital, ll *SuaraKita*, June 27, 2025, <https://suarakita.org/2025/06/revolusi-cinta-attachment-style-dan-transformasi-aku-dia-menjadi-kita-bagi-lgbtq-di-era-digital/>.

² Ester Lianawati, *Revolusi Hati*, 1st ed. (EA Books; Buku Mojok Grup, 2025), 94.

³ Lianawati, *Revolusi Hati*, 97.

⁴ See, August Corneles Tamawiy, —Teopoetika: Sebuah Teologi Yang Tidak Pantas, ll *Indonesian Journal of Theology* 12, no. 1 (2024): 23–48, <https://doi.org/10.46567/ijt.v12i1.463>.

⁵ John D. Caputo, *The Weakness of God: A Theology of the Event*, Indiana Series in the Philosophy of Religion (Indiana University Press, 2006), tit. Unconditionality.

⁶ Matthew Fox, *Meister Eckhart: A Mystic-Warrior for Our Times* (New World Library, 2014), tit. The Historical Jesus: Meister Eckhart Meets Marcus Borg, Bruce Chilton, and John Dominic Crossan.

⁷ Stefanus Christian Haryono, —Kehampaan (Nothingness): Sebuah Jalan Interspiritualitas, ll *GEMA TEOLOGIKA: Jurnal Teologi Kontekstual Dan Filsafat Keilahian* 6, no. 1 (2021): 4, <https://doi.org/10.21460/gema.2021.61.636>.

⁸ John D. Caputo, *The Insistence of God: A Theology of Perhaps*, Indiana Series in the Philosophy of Religion (Indiana University Press, 2013), tit. God, perhaps.

Josua Estomih Butarbutar, Letting Go To Become Whole, Celebrating The Love Sorrow: Theopoetics Through the Mystical Path of Meister Eckhart in the Song

prayer, —I pray God to rid me of God.⁹ This paradox lets go of institutionalized images to welcome the unforeseeable God.

The song —I Love You But I'm Letting Go by Pamungkas¹⁰ becomes a touching theo-poetic expression of this paradigm. Theo-poetics, as a dynamic contemporary movement, opens up space for exploring the transformative spiritual, political, and cultural significance of creative making. It brings art into intimate connection with theory and theology into a generative relation with imagination, attending to ecology, embodiment, and exclusion.¹¹ It articulates suffering—simultaneously sorrow and love—as a sacred space where letting go transforms into a liberating act of faith. This paradoxical dynamic—loving while letting go—finds its contemporary resonance in the song —I Love You But I'm Letting Go. The letting go in Pamungkas' song is not merely interpersonal, but an atheistic praxis.

In an era where God is often marginalized from public discourse and replaced by algorithmic logic,¹² the act of letting go becomes a subversive spiritual practice. Secularization is not the disappearance of God, but a transformation of the divine-human relationship—a shift from absolute entity to —event.¹³ This framework illuminates Pamungkas' song as a *theo-poetic event*: a moment where God emerges not in power, but in the fragile act of release. As Richard Kearney asserts, the return of God —after the death of God is figurative—not a metaphysical resurrection, but a new presence through absence.¹⁴ This song is not merely a romantic lament, but a popular theo-poetics that articulates love-sorrow as a liturgy of letting go. An acknowledgment that true love is born from accepting fragility, not from possession.

Like Eckhart's prayer, this song acknowledges: to love authentically requires the courage to relinquish the image of —God or —the beloved that we have created (I pray God to rid me of God), so that the divine/the beloved may appear in its unforeseeable form. Within Caputo's framework, this is a response to the —weak —insistence¹⁵—a God without power, yet one that stirs human responsibility to bring it into being through concrete action. The courage to —let go of the image in this song reflects a theological shift toward theo-poetics—not a closed metaphysical system, but fragments that respond to the complexities of the age.¹⁶ Religious tradition is now a splinter that —fragments all closed totalities,¹⁷ opening space for new discovery.

The release of the —ideal beloved image in the song parallels the deconstruction of hegemonic images of God. In its lyrics, we will encounter the —poetics of the impossible¹⁸ conceived by Caputo, depicting a dynamics of desire that transcends desire. A desire to know

⁹ Caputo, *The Insistence of God*, tit. Mary and Martha as Postmodern Hosts.

¹⁰ Pamungkas - I Love You But I'm Letting Go, directed by Pamungkas, 2018, 03:43, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NO_cVedXdmM.

¹¹ Heather Walton, —Theo-poetics as Challenge, Change and Creative Making, *Literature and Theology* 33, no. 3 (2019): 229, <https://doi.org/10.1093/litthe/frz030>.

¹² Mark C. Taylor, *After God*, Paperback ed, Religion and Postmodernism (University of Chicago Press, 2009), 3.

¹³ John D. Caputo, *Cross and Cosmos: A Theology of Difficult Glory*, Indiana Series in the Philosophy of Religion (Indiana University Press, 2019), 106–7, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvm20330>.

¹⁴ Scott Holland, —Political Theology, Public Theology, or a theoPoetic Atheism for a Post-Ecclesial, Post-Secular Age?, *CrossCurrents* 72 (June 2022): 141.

¹⁵ Caputo, *The Insistence of God*, tit. God, perhaps; Caputo, *The Insistence of God*, tit. Hospitable Agency.

¹⁶ Holland, —Political Theology, Public Theology, or a theoPoetic Atheism for a Post-Ecclesial, Post-Secular

¹⁶ Holland, —Political Theology, Public Theology, or a theoPoetic Atheism for a Post-Ecclesial, Post-Secular Age?, 142.

¹⁷ Holland, —Political Theology, Public Theology, or a theoPoetic Atheism for a Post-Ecclesial, Post-Secular Age?, 145–46.

¹⁸ Caputo, *The Insistence of God*, tit. The Poetics of the Impossible.

Josua Estomihi Butarbutar, Letting Go To Become Whole, Celebrating The Love Sorrow: Theo-poetics Through the Mystical Path of Meister Eckhart in the Song

what we cannot know, or to love what we dare not love. The letting go in this song is not defeat, but a paradoxical celebration in which humans find wholeness precisely through fragility.

By integrating Meister Eckhart's mysticism of *Gelassenheit* with John D. Caputo's weak theology, this article argues that Pamungkas' song —I Love You But I'm Letting Go functions as a contemporary theopoetic liturgy in which the radical act of letting go—of the beloved, of fixed images of God, and of the ego—paradoxically constitutes not defeat but the very path to self-wholeness and authentic divine encounter, achieved through the embrace of fragility and responsiveness to the transformative event of love-sorrow.

2. Research Method

To rediscover and recreate meaning, this writing employs a study approach to existing texts or literature within the works of Meister Eckhart to delve into the song —I Love You But I'm Letting Go within the discourse of theopoetics—a project of recreating the meaning of God.¹⁹ A transdisciplinary²⁰ qualitative literature study—drawing connections and interrelations between texts that transcend other texts and observing their interweavings. Therefore, this article aims to demonstrate how the song —I Love You But I'm Letting Go functions as a contemporary theopoetic liturgy. To achieve this aim, this article begins by outlining the research method, namely —a radical hermeneutic²¹ approach that integrates Meister Eckhart's mysticism of *Gelassenheit* with John D. Caputo's weak theology and theopoetics, using Pamungkas' song —I Love You But I'm Letting Go as a case study. The discussion then proceeds with an exposition of Eckhart's mystical path of nothingness, focusing on detachment (*Abgeschiedenheit*), the birth of God in the soul, and how his paradoxical language functions as a theopoetic practice. Following this, a radical hermeneutic reading of the song's lyrics is presented verse by verse, demonstrating how the act of letting go embodies *creatio ex profundis*—the birth of meaning from chaos—and serves as a response to the divine —insistence²² within uncertainty. The article then explores the convergence between theopoetics and Eckhart's mysticism in celebrating love-sorrow, engaging trauma as a living witness rather than failure, and articulating —self-transcendence²² as the path to paradoxical wholeness through fragility. Finally, the conclusion affirms that radical letting go is not defeat but a contemporary liturgy that transforms wounds into a river of life, making the human self a home for the Divine who celebrates life in freedom, fragility, and wholeness.

3. Findings and Results

3.1. The Presence of the Theopoe: Tracing Theopoetics in the Mystical Path of Meister Eckhart

Theopoetics emerges as a critical response to logocentrism, the worship of reason that imprisons the Divine within rigid concepts. Traditional dogmatics carries —the musty odor of another era,²³ and systematic theology, pursues closed logical consistency.²³ August Corneles

¹⁹ Tamawiyu, —Teopoetika, 25.

²⁰ See, Reza A. A. Wattimena, *Untuk Semua yang Beragama: Agama dalam Pelukan Filsafat, Politik, dan Spiritualitas* (PT Kanisius, 2020), 3, 33.

²¹ See, Caputo, *The Insistence of God*, tit. The Becoming Radical of Confessional Theology.

²² This sentence inspired by, Stefanus Christian Haryono, *Melampaui Diri Sebagai Jalan Mistik: Interspiritualitas Bunda Teresa dan Ki Ageng Suryomentaram dalam Kajian Perspektif Bernard Lonergan tentang Self-Transcendence*, 1st ed. (Penerbit PT Kanisius, 2025).

²³ August Corneles Tamawiyu, —May The Force Be With You: Jejak Teopoetika dalam Film Star Wars, in *Teologi Budaya Populer di Ruang Publik Indonesia*, 1st ed. (Yayasan Taman Pustaka Kristen Indonesia bekerja sama dengan Fakultas Teologi Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana, 2025), 232.

Tamawiwiy emphasizes, theo-poetics is not merely —theo-poetry,|| but a radical reflection on meaning-making (*poiesis*) concerning *theos*, replacing *logos*.²⁴ Theo-poetics affirms that creative work itself offers significant epistemological resources for remaking theological thinking.²⁵ In this context, the mysticism of Meister Eckhart indeed contains fertile seeds of theo-poetics, particularly in key concepts such as nothingness, detachment, and the breakthrough toward the Godhead. This writing traces the resonance between Eckhart's mystical path and the theo-poetic vision of John D. Caputo.

Meister Eckhart (1254–1328), a German Dominican whose speculative mysticism traversed the boundaries of scholastic orthodoxy, articulated a vision of the soul's unmediated union with the divine that would prove both generative and contentious. His theological project centered upon the radical insistence that divine truth is disclosed not through the external mediations of ecclesiastical authority or scriptural exegesis alone, but through an inward event—the birth of the Word within the ground of the soul (*grunt*). Eckhart's formulation of *Entwerdung* (self-annihilation) and the *scintilla animae* (little spark) pressed toward an identity between the human and the divine that scandalized the guardians of doctrinal purity: —God and I are one in the act of knowing.||²⁶ His condemnation in 1329 renders Eckhart an exemplary figure for theo-poetic imagination. His discourse operates as an apophatic performance that simultaneously constructs and dismantles its own conceptual idols in the service of encounter with the unnameable ground.²⁷ Eckhart firmly asserted that both the human soul and God Himself must be understood within the framework of —nothingness|| (*nibt*). For Eckhart, God is not a limited —entity|| (being), but —beingless being|| that transcends all names and categories: —God is nothing: not in the sense of having no being. He is neither this nor that that one can speak of: He is being above all being. He is beingless being.||²⁸ This paradoxical statement is not a metaphysical negation, but an invitation to transcend conceptual language. In Caputo's terminology, this is the —insistence|| of *theos* that constantly disturbs the boundaries of *logos*. Nothingness in Eckhart is not an end, but the empty space where divine *poiesis* occurs—where the —self-emptying|| soul becomes the medium for the birth of the Word.²⁹

Eckhart emphasized radical detachment (*abegescheidenheit*)—liberation from all attachments, even to spiritual images of God. The soul must become —nameless,|| —formless,|| and —empty of foreign images|| (*entbildet*) to touch *theos* directly.³⁰ This is the practice of de-imaging, aligned with Caputo's deconstruction of theology's —conceptual idols.|| More radically, Eckhart rejected all instrumental motivations in relation to God—true love is that which is done without a reason (without why), just as God Himself acts: —God loves for his own sake and performs all things for his own sake; that is, he loves for love, and he works for working's sake.||³¹

This practice of radical detachment aligns with the nature of constructive theology, which explicitly acknowledges the fallibility of human theological products. It is this acknowledgment of fallibility that makes constructive theology simultaneously de-

²⁴ Tamawiwiy, —Teopoetika,|| 23.

²⁵ Walton, —Theo-poetics as Challenge, Change and Creative Making,|| 230.

²⁶ Rudolf Steiner, *Mystics of the Renaissance: Their Relation to Modern Thought* (Knickerbocker Press, 1911), tit. Meister Eckhart.

²⁷ Kurt Flasch et al., *Meister Eckhart: Philosopher of Christianity* (Yale University Press, 2015), tit. A Look Ahead at Reception.

²⁸ Louis Roy, *Mystical Consciousness: Western Perspectives and Dialogue with Japanese Thinkers* (State University of New York Press, 2003), 80.

²⁹ Roy, *Mystical Consciousness*, 75.

³⁰ Roy, *Mystical Consciousness*, 75.

³¹ Roy, *Mystical Consciousness*, 84.

constructive (dismantling rigid truth claims) and re-constructive (building new meaning)³²—a living dialectic found in Caputo's weak theology. For Caputo, this stance is a form of weak theology—a surrender to the —event|| that surpasses the calculations of *logos*, a passive-receptive response to an unbounded —call.||³³

The pinnacle of Eckhart's mystical path is the breakthrough (*durchbruch*) to the Godhead—the divine reality beyond —God|| as persona. Here, the soul does not merely unite with God, but transcends itself in the continual rebirth of the Word: —God begets His Son in the soul continually and without interruption.||³⁴ This process is *poiesis*, not logical: it occurs in —darkness|| and —silence|| where conceptual language fails. Caputo calls this the —event||—an unforeseeable moment of disclosure where *theos*—and in Eckhart's words, —steals in like a thief|| (—It came like a thief by stealth||).³⁵ In this breakthrough, the subject-object relation collapses, and the soul becomes the ever-renewing field of divine meaning-creation (*poiesis*).

This deconstruction of an objectified concept of God is an absolute prerequisite for theoetics, which requires —a phenomenological epoche that suspends the supernatural attitude... to lead back (*reducere*) to the things themselves.||³⁶ Eckhart rigorously performed this epoche, stripping away all images and concepts to open space for the unsayable. This process is not an active effort of the intellect (*intellectus*), but a passive reception by the —Little Spark|| (*Fünklein* or *scintilla animae*), the deepest, untouched part of the soul ready to receive the Divine presence directly. True theology works —in the passive or receptive mode.|| Eckhart made this radical passivity the primary path. The —Birth of God|| in the soul is an experienced —event,|| not a formulated proposition—a fulfillment of —the event that takes place in and under the name (of) —God'.||³⁷

Theoetics is discourse that is indirect, subtle, non-literal, and evocative, provocative, analogical, paralogical, parabolic, hyperbolic, metaphorical, and metonymical. This approach relies on creative imagination and the vitality of metaphor—as emphasized in constructive theology. For when the imaginative and symbolic frameworks underlying theological vocabulary die, the concept itself loses its power: —No conceptual effort can restore concepts that derive their meaning from dead symbols.||³⁸ It is called —primordial poetry,|| —formative discourse,|| and —the midwife that assists in the birth of the event of the Divine call.||³⁹ Eckhart is considered a master of this type of language. His sermons are rich with paradoxes that challenge ordinary logic, for example: the unity of human and divine sight, emptiness from worldly things as a condition for divine fullness, and God as the —unutterable word.' These paradoxes are not mere wordplay, but theoetic tools that shift rational *logos* through poetic force—an attempt to revive divine meaning through metaphorical structures that shake logocentric consciousness. Its aim is to awaken the provocation of the Kingdom of God and stimulate direct experience beyond concepts, unsettling routine human consciousness toward a consciousness astonished by the —Divine call.||

Eckhart's central concept, the —Birth of God in the Soul,|| is the crystallization of theoetic experience. This is not the historical birth of —Jesus in Bethlehem,|| but a mystical event occurring continually in the soul that is empty and ready. For Eckhart, when the soul

³² Tamawiyw, —May The Force Be With You: Jejak Teopoetika dalam Film Star Wars,|| 231–32.

³³ Tamawiyw, —Teopoetika,|| 35.

³⁴ Meister Eckhart, *The Complete Mystical Works of Meister Eckhart*, ed. Maurice O'C Walshe, A Herder & Herder Book (Crossroad Publ. Co, 2009), 19.

³⁵ Eckhart, *The Complete Mystical Works of Meister Eckhart*, 35.

³⁶ Caputo, *Cross and Cosmos*, tit. Theoetics as a Hermeneutics of the Kingdom.

³⁷ Caputo, *Cross and Cosmos*, tit. Theoetics as a Hermeneutics of the Kingdom.

³⁸ Tamawiyw, —May The Force Be With You: Jejak Teopoetika dalam Film Star Wars,|| 233.

³⁹ Caputo, *Cross and Cosmos*, tit. Theoetics as a Hermeneutics of the Kingdom.

achieves perfect emptiness (*Abgeschiedenheit*), God must be born within it—this is God's own creative act (*poiesis*) within the soul. This experience is the essence of the Kingdom of God which is —within,|| just as Scripture —speak[s] from out of the experience of the Kingdom, which is not without but within.||⁴⁰ The Presence of the Theopoet in Eckhart's mysticism is a presence that continually gives birth to Itself within the open field of human consciousness.

Eckhart's mystical path tangibly exemplifies the —Presence of the Theopoet|| and the practice of theo-poetics. Following the guidance of radical theology, which demands that theology remain exposed to the primordial event that calls for expression, while rejecting canonical, dogmatic, definitive, rigid, and formulaic expression, Eckhart took risks with teachings and language that exceeded orthodox boundaries—culminating in his trial. Yet, this is precisely its —strength in weakness,|| its —crown of thorns.|| Eckhart's strength lies in his steadfast fidelity to the direct experience of the Divine (*die Sache selbst*),⁴¹ which demands poetic, paradoxical expression beyond propositional logic. Through emptiness, passivity, and paradoxical language, we concretely witness how theo-poetics—as the —interpretation of the birth of God||—becomes a radical and transformative spiritual path. The Presence of the Theopoet is a presence that continually gives birth to the New in the soul courageous enough to let go of all images, including the image of God itself.

This mystical *breakthrough* resonates deeply with contemporary spiritual seekers, especially Generations Z and Alpha, who navigate digital alienation and existential emptiness.⁴² In a world dominated by data and noise, Eckhart's call to *'become a desert'* and to find God in the *grunt/ground* of the soul offers a radical alternative to the homogenization of spirituality.⁴³ Theo-poetics, as a *theology without theology*, thus becomes a vital path for those seeking God beyond dogma—a path where silence, emptiness, and release become mediums of divine encounter.

3.2. Letting Go to Give Birth to the Divine: A Radical Hermeneutic of the Song "I Love You But I'm Letting Go" through Eckhart's Mystical Path

In an effort to discuss a radical hermeneutic reading of the song, this writing includes the lyrics verse by verse and examines them using the perspective of Eckhart's mystical path as a project of meaning recreation:

- Verse 1
 Sunday night after a rainy day
 I delete all your pictures
 I walked away from you
 Nights are the hardest
 But I'll be okay
 If we are meant to be
 Yeah, we'll find our way
 But now, let it be

This first verse enacts the detachment (*abegescheidenheit*) essential to Eckhart's teaching: the soul must release all worldly attachments, mental images, and memories to reach the —ground of the soul|| where divine birth occurs. —The soul must keep absolutely

⁴⁰ Caputo, *Cross and Cosmos*, tit. Theo-poetics as a Hermeneutics of the Kingdom.

⁴¹ Caputo, *Cross and Cosmos*, tit. Theo-poetics as a Hermeneutics of the Kingdom.

⁴² Josua Estomihi Butarbutar, —The Marginalised God: Teopoetika, Jalan Mistik, Dan Seksualitas Pasca Tuhan,|| *Aradha: Journal of Divinity, Peace and Conflict Studies* 5, no. 2 (2025): 171–72, <https://doi.org/10.21460/aradha.2025.52.1517>.

⁴³ Butarbutar, —The Marginalised God,|| 158.

pure and must live in noble fashion, quite collected and turned entirely inward, not running out through the five senses into the multiplicity of creatures.⁴⁴ Deleting photographs symbolizes this release of —images‖ that obstruct the soul’s union with God. Rachel Mann affirms this as poetry creating a —space of discovery‖ through what is left unsaid.⁴⁵ Walking away from a human relationship becomes a metaphor for leaving the —crowd‖ of worldly desires. Trust in life’s —natural way‖ then reflects *éwige geburt*, the eternal birth of the Word, which occurs when the soul releases all images and personal desires. This requires inner purity, which Eckhart calls —silence and stillness.⁴⁶ Humans must act —from the ground of contemplation,⁴⁷ relinquishing all attachment to creation, including mental images and personal will.

Eckhart’s metaphysics might be characterized as a —metaphysics of flow,‖ in which existence follows a circular motion. The process of emanation from God toward creation is essentially inseparable from the process of reabsorption of all things back to God. This dual flow appears also in his understanding of grace: the first grace is the —outflow or departure‖ from God toward individual existence, whereas the second grace is the —return flow‖ or homecoming to God.⁴⁸

The line —If you love somebody, gotta set them free‖ reflects Eckhart’s radical principle of self-release. For Eckhart, letting go is not merely a physical act but a spiritual self-denial reaching the ground of the soul. True love is *agape* that releases, not *eros* that binds. This parallels the *bullitio-ebullitio* dynamic:⁴⁹ all creation —flows out‖ (*ebullitio*) from God and must —return‖ (*reditus*) to Him. Release is part of this cosmic flow. Only in total silence and emptiness, without images or mental activity, can the Divine Word be born.⁵⁰ This perspective aligns with the mystical view of love as an inner freedom attained through detachment. As Dhimas Anugrah emphasizes, —love is not about possessing someone or something, but about releasing all attachments that prevent one from experiencing true happiness.‖ The act of letting go becomes the very condition for a love that is —unconditional, demands no reciprocation, and does not depend on the response of others.⁵¹

Theopoetics is born from *bricolage*, assembling meaning from the —ruins‖ of repressed experience.⁵² Deleting photos is *bricolage*: transforming fragments of hurt into an empty space (*khora*) for the Divine. The process of —I delete all your pictures‖ and —I walk away‖ parallels Eckhart’s teaching on abandoning mental and sensory images. Eckhart would urge the singer, and even the listener of this song, not only to —release‖ the beloved but also their own ego, so that the soul —without a why‖ (*sunder warumbe*)⁵³ unites with the Ground of All Grounds: —Once the birth has really occurred, no creatures can hinder you; instead, they will all direct you to God and this birth Yes, all things become simply God to you, for in all

⁴⁴ Eckhart, *The Complete Mystical Works of Meister Eckhart*, 30.

⁴⁵ Rachel Mann, —On —Making Nothing Happen‘: The Apophatic Power of Poetry and the Poetic Power of Silence,‖ *Modern Believing* 65, no. 2 (2024): 139, <https://doi.org/10.3828/mb.2024.10>.

⁴⁶ Bernard McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart: The Man from Whom God Hid Nothing*, The Edward Cadbury Lectures 2000–2001 (Crossroad Pub, 2001), 55–57.

⁴⁷ McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart*, 59.

⁴⁸ McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart*, 72–73.

⁴⁹ McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart*, 42.

⁵⁰ Eckhart, *The Complete Mystical Works of Meister Eckhart*, 30–31.

⁵¹ Dhimas Anugrah, *Filosofi Cinta: Rahasia Menikmati Keindahan Hidup*, 1st ed. (PT Kanisius, 2025), 178–79.

⁵² Heather Walton, —A Theopoetics of Practice: Re-Forming in Practical Theology: Presidential Address to the International Academy of Practical Theology, Eastertide 2017,‖ *International Journal of Practical Theology* 23, no. 1 (2019): 14–16, <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijpt-2018-0033>.

⁵³ McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart*, 49.

things you notice and love only God, just as a man who stares long at the sun in heaven sees the sun in whatever he afterward looks at.⁵⁴

This process of *deleting images* is not only a spiritual discipline but also an embodied one. The body itself, as James B. Nelson asserts, is a —body-word of love, a medium of transcendence that overcomes the dualism of spirit and matter.⁵⁵ This aligns with a key concern in theopoetics, which attends to the relation between intense creaturely suffering and divine creativity.⁵⁶ In the song, releasing the beloved's pictures is an act of *embodied detachment* that mirrors Eckhart's *Abgeschiedenheit*. It also reflects a broader spiritual inclusivity, where diverse identities, including those of gender and sexuality, are recognized as integral to the divine-human encounter.⁵⁷ Letting go, then, is not a denial of the body but a celebration of it as a site of sacred release.

- Verse 2
 Little did I know, love is easy
 But why was it so hard?
 It was like never enough
 I gave you all still you want more
 Can't you see?
 Can't you see?
 That you want someone that I'm not
 Yes, I love but I can't
 So I am letting you go now and baby one day
 When you finally found what you want
 And you're ready to open your heart to anyone
 Don't push people away again
 Easier, I know, but it's also very lonely, yeah

In his sermons, Eckhart asserts that true love (*charitas*) is divine and unconditional, not a human transaction that demands reciprocation. He states, —God is love. Whatever can love must love Him, whether it will or no.⁵⁸ The human love described in the lyrics, —Little did I know, love is easy, but why was it so hard? It was like never enough, I gave you all still you want more,⁵⁹ is characterized by attachment. Eckhart considers such attachment an obstacle to experiencing divine love. This suffering arises from attachment to another's expectations. Humans suffer when they live through an image projected by others (*eigenschaft*) rather than from their own ground (*grunt*). Detachment (*abgeschiedenheit*) is the —cutting off of everything that is not one's essence.⁵⁹

The narrator's disappointment stems from viewing love as a —giving that must be balanced. For Eckhart, by contrast, true love is the passive reception of the divine presence, not an attempt to control.⁶⁰ This becomes a space to witness the Transcendent, the —more than that invites humanity beyond functional needs.⁶¹ The narrator is trapped in *eigenschaft*, trying to become —someone they are not in order to be loved.

⁵⁴ McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart*, 64.

⁵⁵ James B. Nelson, *Embodiment: An Approach to Sexuality and Christian Theology* (Augsburg Pub. House, 1979), 35.

⁵⁶ Walton, —Theopoetics as Challenge, Change and Creative Making,¹ 229.

⁵⁷ See, Butarbutar, —The Marginalised God,¹ 161–68.

⁵⁸ Eckhart, *The Complete Mystical Works of Meister Eckhart*, 62.

⁵⁹ McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart*, 9, 16.

⁶⁰ Eckhart, *The Complete Mystical Works of Meister Eckhart*, 58.

⁶¹ Mann, —On Making Nothing Happen,¹ 137.

The line —Yes, I love but I can't|| reveals an inability to love from a state of fragmented identity. Happiness is possible only when a person acts from their ground, where divine identity resides. As Eckhart says, —God's ground and my ground is one ground.|| In that ground, no dichotomy exists between —I|| and —your expectations.||⁶² The relationship's failure stems from the narrator's attempt to live outside their own ground.

The decision to —let go|| of the partner reflects Eckhart's concept of *gelassenheit*. He emphasizes, —You must abandon yourself and all things... become a desert in respect of yourself.|| By releasing attachment to an inauthentic relationship, the narrator performs a purification of the soul. This purification enables a —new birth,|| which is possible only when the soul is empty of selfish desires. Eckhart stresses the importance of —becoming a desert,|| that is, becoming empty of oneself and all worldly attachments. Self-release (*Abegescheidenheit*) is not a rejection of love but a purification of the soul so that the Divine Word may be born within it. Eckhart explains, —Where God will thus know Himself, there your knowledge is of no avail.||⁶³ By letting go of personal knowledge and desires, the soul becomes a vessel for God's presence.

Furthermore, Eckhart states that God's love is a releasing love (*Deus caritas est*), and this love is inevitable. —God loves my soul so much that His life and being depend on His loving me, whether He would or no.||⁶⁴ True love is therefore not possession but total surrender, analogous to God who —must love|| because love is the divine essence. Liberation occurs through release: when the narrator releases the beloved, they preserve the very essence of love itself. This parallels the soul achieving union with God through the absence of desire (acting —without a why||). The warning —Don't push people away again|| is an admonition not to repeat patterns of attachment. Wise action springs from a ground (*grunt*) that is —well-trained|| (*wol geübte grunt*) and works —without a why,|| not for reward or fear of loss but because it is aligned with divine nature.⁶⁵ The narrator invites the former lover to act from inner freedom (*gelassenheit*) rather than from fear.⁶⁶

Eckhart would view the decision of —letting you go|| as a preliminary step but not yet radical. Letting go of a relationship does not automatically mean one has released the inner need for recognition or validation. The true solution, according to Eckhart, lies in a person's return to the ground (*grunt*) of their own existence. Here the dichotomy between —I|| and —your desires or needs|| dissolves. Genuine transformation must begin with inner liberation, a process of —breaking through images|| that bind, rather than merely changing or avoiding old behavioral patterns.

- Chorus and Coda
 - I love you but I'm letting go
 - I love you but I'm letting go
 - I love you and I'm letting go

⁶² McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart*, 44–45.

⁶³ Eckhart, *The Complete Mystical Works of Meister Eckhart*, 56–57.

⁶⁴ McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart*, 62–63.

⁶⁵ McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart*, 49.

⁶⁶ See, Anugrah, *Filosofi Cinta: Rahasia Menikmati Keindahan Hidup*, 179. This verse also touches upon the social dimension of love hinted at in the mystical perspective. While the primary movement is inward release, the admonition —Don't push people away again|| points towards love's role in creating harmony. It suggests that the ultimate goal of inner freedom is not isolation, but a return to relationship with a purified heart, capable of contributing to a healthy society built not only on laws but on love that guides one to act with virtue and a sense of responsibility.; See also, Walton, —Theopoetics as Challenge, Change and Creative Making,|| 230. True *Gelassenheit* thus prepares the soul for a love that can be a social adhesive that unites, balances, and builds harmony. This echoes the theoepoetic intention to envision "new communal futures" through creative collaboration.

It is the only way, you know?
 And from now on I will hold my own hand
 Until one day you'll hold my lonely hand
 Ooh, ooh...

Eckhart emphasizes that true love for God or the highest reality requires total release from all attachments, including the very concept of —love itself when that concept remains selfish. Letting go is not rejection but the perfection of love, freeing it from possession. Eckhart rejects structured methods of spiritual attainment. Truth is found only by —letting go of all means, including concepts of God, until the soul is empty and ready to receive the birth of the Word in the *grunt*.⁶⁷

The chorus repetition performs what Eckhart calls *Gelassenheit*, the letting be that eschews control. As James Olthuis writes, —*Gelassenheit* is a surrender of our will to control, a giving over to the cosmic wave of God's love.⁶⁸ When the singer repeats "I love you *but/and* I'm letting go," the shifting conjunction from *but* to *and* traces the movement from resistance to acceptance. This mirrors Eckhart's insight that the soul must abandon even its attachment to a particular form of love, creating a —desert within where the Divine Word can be born.

—Whoever seeks God by a 'way' has lost the Way.⁶⁹ When the soul releases all external things, including human relationships, it discovers its own *grunt*, the place where it unites with the divine *grunt*. —Holding my own hand symbolizes the awareness that in the depths of the self a human is already one with God. As Eckhart says, —God's ground is my ground, and my ground is God's ground.⁷⁰ The —loneliness reflects *wüestunge*, the wilderness of the soul, a condition of emptiness where the Word is born. This is what Olthuis calls —the wild spaces of love, uncharted intervals where connection remains possible without guarantees.⁷¹ The divine —hand holding is a boundless union in the ground, where the soul no longer distinguishes itself from God. The singer's willingness to wait for the other's hand without demanding it exemplifies love as gift and call. —Love is a gifting: the creation, all creatures, we, I, all are loved into being. Simultaneously, Love is a calling.⁷² Releasing love is the path to true love without possession. Human loneliness is a prerequisite for divine union. —Holding my own hand is not egoism but the awareness that the ground of humanity is God himself.

The wordless coda opens *khora*, the primordial receptive space opened by appeal. In this silence, where conceptual mastery ceases, —the weak God of Caputo's theology finds momentum. A vulnerable divinity is born precisely in the soul's release. Letting go thus becomes not abandonment of love but its perfection, an act —without why (*sunder warumbe*) that reveals love as —the very condition of possibility for uniqueness itself. This song depicts the existential struggle of modern humanity, which aligns with Eckhart's mysticism. Suffering arises when one lives based on external images and is disconnected from the ground of true identity. The solution is not merely ending a relationship but releasing oneself from the need to be —someone acknowledged by the external world. Within the ground of existence, humans discover a true identity that is boundless and independent of external

⁶⁷ See, McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart*, 34,55-56.

⁶⁸ James H. Olthuis, *Dancing in the Wild Spaces of Love: A Theopoetics of Gift and Call, Risk and Promise*, 1st ed, Currents in Reformational Thought Series (Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2022), tit. Crossing the Threshold: A Vision of Love.

⁶⁹ McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart*, 38-39.

⁷⁰ McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart*, 44-45.

⁷¹ Olthuis, *Dancing in the Wild Spaces of Love*, tit. Wild Spaces, Wild Times.

⁷² Olthuis, *Dancing in the Wild Spaces of Love*, tit. God: Trinity of Love.

validation, and there true love becomes possible.⁷³ As Eckhart declares, —My life is the being of God; because my life is the being of God, therefore God's essence is my own essence.¶⁷⁴ This paradoxical statement affirms the boundless unity between the true human self and the Divine.⁷⁵

3.3. Letting Go, Transcending, Becoming Whole, Celebrating the Self: The Convergence of Theopoetics and Eckhart's Mystical Path as a Means to Celebrate Love-Sorrow

The dynamics of love are in truth whole; experience as a source of meaning creation is a bounded space that gives place to where the remnants of past wounds, a trauma that still lingers, confront present reality. In *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining*, Shelly Rambo introduces the concept of —remaining.¶ Trauma is not a finished event of the past, but a wound that continues to live in the body, memory, and relationships.⁷⁶ Here, Rambo offers a —theology of remaining¶ centered on the space between death and life—a place where the Spirit works in silence and uncertainty.⁷⁷ This focus on embodiment and trauma is a significant strand within theopoetics, which takes embodiment as its generative source.⁷⁸ This experience resonates strongly with the first dimension of Erik Olsman's concept of resonance in his article *Resonance in a Theopoetics of Practice in Practical Theology*, in sensing a deep connection with a practice, often at a pre-verbal level. Traumatic wounds often lie beyond the reach of rational language; they are experienced as bodily sensations, fragmented memories, or an overwhelming affective atmosphere.⁷⁹

Those wounds remain on the resurrected body. Those wounds are not mere displays. They must be touched—experienced physically.⁸⁰ The wound is not a failure to heal, but a living witness that trauma never truly —ends,¶ but continues to live as an afterlife—a continuation of life in the shadow of death.⁸¹ Traditional theology often gets trapped in narratives of conquest or perfect restoration (e.g., the —war¶ metaphor against illness)⁸² which can actually deny the alterity of the victim's experience and —mask its raw reality.¶ From there, resonance is —using poetics to redescribe a practice in which reality itself may appear as resonance.¶⁸³ This is where the power of theopoetics shines. When direct descriptive language fails to reach the depths of trauma or mystical experience, poetry, symbol, and metaphor—like Eckhart's —hunger for God¶ or —silent desert¶—become means of redescription that are more honest and resonant.

This theopoetics of remaining is especially pertinent for Generations Z and Alpha, who often experience trauma and alienation in digital spaces. These generations face unique existential voids—*emptiness*—that traditional religious narratives often fail to address Yet, in this emptiness lies the potential for *anatheism*: a return to God after God, through doubt and

⁷³ McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart*, 50.

⁷⁴ McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart*, 15.

⁷⁵ See, Anugrah, *Filosofi Cinta: Rahasia Menikmati Keindahan Hidup*, 181. This echoes the mystical understanding that —Love is not something to be found outside oneself, but rather how one perceives the world and that the journey is ultimately one of realizing that one has already become love itself.¶

⁷⁶ Shelly Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining*, 1st ed (Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), tit. Introduction.

⁷⁷ Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, tit. Writing Holy Saturday.

⁷⁸ Walton, —Theopoetics as Challenge, Change and Creative Making,¶ 231.

⁷⁹ Erik Olsman, —Resonance in a Theopoetics of Practice in Practical Theology,¶ *International Journal of Practical Theology* 26, no. 2 (2022): 316–17, <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijpt-2021-0031>.

⁸⁰ Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, tit. Calvin's Thomas.

⁸¹ Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, tit. The Posttraumatic.

⁸² Olsman, —Resonance in a Theopoetics of Practice in Practical Theology,¶ 323.

⁸³ Olsman, —Resonance in a Theopoetics of Practice in Practical Theology,¶ 313, 319.

dialogue.⁸⁴ Pamungkas' song, as a viral digital artifact, becomes a *liturgy of nothingness*—a way to embrace spiritual emptiness as the ground for new birth.

In this space between death and life, the —birth of God in the soul|| appears as a space to celebrate love-sorrow. The resurrected wound, in this view, is an invitation to let go of the illusion of perfect recovery and embrace the paradox: new life can be born without denying the scars. A theological response to trauma requires a theopoetic approach—a theology that prioritizes aesthetic sensitivity and an awareness of the limits of language. When words fail to reach the depths of wounds, poetry, symbol, and metaphor become more truthful means of witnessing.⁸⁵ In the context of trauma, theopoetics is an effort to celebrate the fragile⁸⁶—like the blood and water flowing from Jesus's side (John 19:34), where the remaining wound becomes the source of new life.

Trauma and wounds are life companions that enable humans to continuously become and to remain —possible,|| opening endeavors to transcend themselves. The detached God participates in the process with humanity. From this, theopoetics celebrates the fragile, aligning with Caputo's spirit that the (kingdom of) God works through —weak forces|| like unconditional forgiveness and unconditional hospitality, considered —folly|| by the world.⁸⁷ Unconditional forgiveness—forgiving without demanding remorse, restitution, or a promise not to repeat—is —folly|| in worldly logic, as insane as loving enemies or welcoming hatred with love. Likewise, unconditional hospitality—opening the door in the middle of the night to an unknown, potentially hostile guest—is a risk and a paradoxical —weak|| act. In the context of trauma, theopoetics becomes a concrete form of —weak thought,|| embracing ambiguity and risk, rejecting the absolute certainty of strong theology, and making space for fragmentary and metaphorical witnessing of the wounds that remain.

The spaces where trauma and wounds reside are spaces for humans to continuously become and transcend themselves. Stefanus Christian Haryono, in *Melampauai Diri Sebagai Jalan Mistik*, asserts that the essence of the human self is dynamic, not static. This dynamics refers to inner development made possible only through consciousness. Consciousness is not merely a subject-object relation, but a bridge between the self and the cosmos: it is a reality encompassing —the inside, the outside, the near, the far, the heights, the breadth... which transcends boundaries, and is the seat of all realities.||⁸⁸ Through consciousness, humans understand reality via —pure intuition|| and embody it in —pure compassion.|| Here, consciousness transcends internal processes to become an outward expression that forms a —community of consciousness||—a space where humans recognize themselves as part of a —primary community of interconnected beings.||⁸⁹ We inhabit consciousness, and in essence we are that consciousness, but this consciousness is not personal property: it belongs to an inseparable cosmic community. The cosmos, life, and existence are a whole system created and sustained within consciousness.

Eckhart describes the *grunt/ground* as a “*Sprengmetapher*” (exploding metaphor)⁹⁰—a dynamic space that transcends subject-object boundaries and becomes the meeting point of the divine and the human. Within the *grunt/ground*, the human intellect transcends the

⁸⁴ See, Richard Kearney, *Anatheism: Returning to God after God*, Insurrections - Critical Studies in Religion, Politics, and Culture (Columbia Univ. Press, 2010).

⁸⁵ Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, tit. Method.

⁸⁶ Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, tit. Writing Holy Saturday.

⁸⁷ John D. Caputo, *The Folly of God: A Theology of the Unconditional*, Seminar on God and the Human Future, v. 1 (Polebridge Press, 2016), tit. Weakness All the Way Down.

⁸⁸ Haryono, *Melampauai Diri Sebagai Jalan Mistik*, 63.

⁸⁹ Haryono, *Melampauai Diri Sebagai Jalan Mistik*, 64.

⁹⁰ McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart*, 38.

concept of God toward the —quiet desert— a space without form, time, or distinction. Eckhart wants to free us from the human-made —God— a God limited by our concepts, images, and arguments, whether from philosophy or theology. Rejecting this —God is not the end of God, but the entrance to the true God: the —God beyond God who is unspeakable. We must be careful not to think —beyond means —above (*ens supremum*). The true God is precisely the —Ground (*grunt/ground*) found in the depth of the human soul, not in the highest heaven. Think inward and downward, not upward and high.⁹¹

Looking into the depths of the soul, love-sorrow thus is also a process of self-transcendence to continually become one's true self, seeing trauma and past wounds as integral parts of life and feelings that transcend life experiences. The deepest spiritual experience is forged through contemplation, which becomes the sign of mystical inner maturity. Contemplation is defined as the ability to know divinity and oneself in an intimate relationship that transcends worldly boundaries. This inner process involves simplification and clarification of the self as preparation for union with God. It requires a clear and healthy self-identity. The restoration of the human self-image must come before the ability to restore the image of humanity at large. Without this self-healing process, the self risks becoming the next oppressor. Healing self-identity is a long-term process and an important part of transforming mystical life. The restored life then becomes a model for victims of injustice— demonstrating ways to forgive, recognize, and restore one's own humanity and even that of the perpetrators of injustice. Final integration is achieved through an inner journey marked by openness, presence, listening, spontaneity, and joy.⁹²

Human love-sorrow becomes a means of folly that causes humans to lose the ability to accept themselves and to change what can be changed or to preserve what has remained a mystery. Similarly, with the song —I Love You But I'm Letting Go, acts like unconditional forgiveness and unconditional hospitality are —folly in worldly logic because they transcend retributive calculation. This action is not a sign of weakness, but a form that embraces wounds as integral parts of life without the illusion of perfect reconciliation. It is a response to the divine call of —dancing to music they do not hear.⁹³ In the eyes of the world, this appears —mad, yet it restores humanity by opening space for the impossible. However, a critical theopoetic perspective reminds us that the very concept of —creativity which undergirds such transformative acts is deeply ambiguous. It functions as a dominant cipher for what is vital, transformative, and hopeful, yet exploring it fully entails a loss of innocence, but also a greater depth of awareness of the dark complexity that poetics mediates for us. The act of letting go, as creative resistance, thus carries within it both the hope for new birth and an acknowledgment of the complex, often painful, realities from which it emerges.

Transcending the self is not merely an act, but the fulfilled status of human being. This status is achieved through the intentionality of the subject's consciousness in its empirical experience, especially in relation to others and God. The process of achieving it is driven by the fundamental paradox of human consciousness: —Knowing while simultaneously aware of not knowing. This paradox triggers an unlimited desire to understand reality, manifested in continuous questioning through three cognitive stages: Experiencing empirical data, understanding meaning, and critically judging truth.⁹⁴ Transcending the self is the ontological movement of humans from potential toward the fulfillment of existence, through questioning consciousness tested in experience, guided by critical judgment, fulfilled in love, and supported by continuous conversion toward the Unbounded.

⁹¹ Caputo, *The Folly of God*, tit. Theology Begins with Atheism.

⁹² Haryono, *Melampaui Diri Sebagai Jalan Mistik*, 82–84.

⁹³ Caputo, *The Folly of God*, tit. The Folly of the Call.

⁹⁴ Haryono, *Melampaui Diri Sebagai Jalan Mistik*, 122–26.

The dynamics of love-sorrow—simultaneously wound and love—turn out not to be the end of the journey, but the *khora*: the empty space where human wholeness is reborn. Like Eckhart's prayer, —I pray God to rid me of God,|| Pamungkas' song invites us to let go of images of love, God, even the self, so that the Divine may appear in its unexpected fragility. Letting go is not defeat, but a radical liturgy to celebrate the fragile. Celebrating love-sorrow is an effort of a revolution of the heart and soul toward a love that becomes pure again. It returns to the original love, which is enigmatic; it is mysterious and full of riddles, difficult to understand and also difficult to attain; and therefore it continues to be what occupies our minds.⁹⁵ This resonates with the final mystical insight that love is a mystery that remains, even when humans try to approach it in various ways, and that perhaps it is not love that needs to be found by humans, but the awareness that they have been living within it from the beginning.⁹⁶

When we dare to —delete all your pictures, we begin de-imagining—stripping away the idols of love to welcome the Unforeseeable that comes. Finally, the theo-poetics of this song echoes the eternal paradox: —I love you and I'm letting go|| is not a desperate final statement, but *bullitio*—the divine insistence from the ground of the soul. In a world that worships certainty, letting go becomes a creation within impossibility (poetics of the impossible). By letting go of everything—even images of God and self—we become the home where the Divine celebrates its own life: fragile, free, and whole. This is the feast of love-sorrow: tearing open the ceiling of certainty, so that an unexpected rain of light can flood our wounds into a river of life.

4. Conclusion

Theo-poetics, when joined to Eckhart's mystical path, transforms the ordinary act of releasing a beloved into a radical liturgy of self emptying. Pamungkas' song does not merely narrate heartbreak; it performs *Gelassenheit* as a deliberate unmaking of every image that binds the soul, including the image of God and the image of the ego. This performance yields three synthetic insights.

First, letting go is a mode of *creatio ex profundis*. The chaos of love sorrow, with its overlapping wound and affection, becomes the *tehom* where meaning is born anew. Unlike a creation from nothing that secures divine power, the song's deletion of photos and its embrace of loneliness open a *khora* in which the divine —insistencell can emerge without control. The soul's emptiness is not a lack but a generative field.

Second, trauma and wounds cease to be failures. Drawing on Rambo's theology of remaining, the analysis shows that the —love you but I'm letting go|| dynamic keeps the wound alive as a witness. This living wound does not demand perfect healing; instead, it becomes the very site where identity is reshaped. The song's coda, wordless and open, invites the weak force of God to find momentum in fragility. Suffering is not resolved but celebrated as the space of transformation.

Third, self transcendence is achieved paradoxically through release. Eckhart's *grunt* and Caputo's event converge in the act of holding one's own hand, which is neither isolation nor egoism. It is the recognition that the ground of the self and the ground of God are one. Wholeness, therefore, is not the accumulation of healed parts but the willingness to remain in the wild spaces of love without guarantees. The singer's final wordless vocalization is not resignation; it is the sound of a soul that has let go of every —why|| and dwells in pure being.

⁹⁵ Lianawati, *Revolusi Hati*, 104.

⁹⁶ Anugrah, *Filosofi Cinta: Rahasia Menikmati Keindahan Hidup*, 185.

The song offers a contemporary soteriology without salvation as conquest. It saves by releasing, heals by wounding, and unites by separating. To become whole, one must first become empty. To celebrate love, one must embrace sorrow. This is the theopoetic gift of Pamungkas' lyric: a fragile, free, and whole self that no longer clings to any image, because it has become the home where the divine births itself again and again. For humans are born in love, and they continue to seek it. The God who is —I am who I am is also, so simply, just —love. So, from the first, everything has its existence in this God, who is better called love, for that love spreads, diffusing everywhere, unifying us, all in one.⁹⁷

5. References

- Anugrah, Dhimas. *Filosofi Cinta: Rahasia Menikmati Keindahan Hidup*. 1st ed. PT Kanisius, 2025.
- Butarbutar, Josua Estomihi. —The Marginalised God: Teopoetika, Jalan Mistik, Dan Seksualitas Pasca Tuhan. *Aradha: Journal of Divinity, Peace and Conflict Studies* 5, no. 2 (2025): 155–77. <https://doi.org/10.21460/aradha.2025.52.1517>.
- Caputo, John D. *Cross and Cosmos: A Theology of Difficult Glory*. Indiana Series in the Philosophy of Religion. Indiana University Press, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvm20330>.
- Caputo, John D. *The Folly of God: A Theology of the Unconditional*. Seminar on God and the Human Future, v. 1. Polebridge Press, 2016.
- Caputo, John D. *The Insistence of God: A Theology of Perhaps*. Indiana Series in the Philosophy of Religion. Indiana University Press, 2013.
- Caputo, John D. *The Weakness of God: A Theology of the Event*. Indiana Series in the Philosophy of Religion. Indiana University Press, 2006.
- Eckhart, Meister. *The Complete Mystical Works of Meister Eckhart*. Edited by Maurice O'C Walshe. A Herder & Herder Book. Crossroad Publ. Co, 2009.
- Flasch, Kurt, Anne Schindel, and Aaron Vanides. *Meister Eckhart: Philosopher of Christianity*. Yale University Press, 2015.
- Fox, Matthew. *Meister Eckhart: A Mystic-Warrior for Our Times*. New World Library, 2014.
- Haryono, Stefanus Christian. —Kehampaan (Nothingness): Sebuah Jalan Interspiritualitas. *GEMA TEOLOGIKA: Jurnal Teologi Kontekstual Dan Filsafat Keilahan* 6, no. 1 (2021): 1. <https://doi.org/10.21460/gema.2021.61.636>.
- Haryono, Stefanus Christian. *Melampaui Diri Sebagai Jalan Mistik: Interspiritualitas Bunda Teresa dan Ki Ageng Suryomentaram dalam Kajian Perspektif Bernard Lonergan tentang Self-Transcendence*. 1st ed. Penerbit PT Kanisius, 2025.
- Holland, Scott. —Political Theology, Public Theology, or a theoPoetic Anatheism for a Post-Ecclesial, Post-Secular Age? *CrossCurrents* 72 (June 2022).
- Kearney, Richard. *Anatheism: Returning to God after God*. Insurrections - Critical Studies in Religion, Politics, and Culture. Columbia Univ. Press, 2010.
- Lianawati, Ester. *Revolusi Hati*. 1st ed. EA Books; Buku Mojok Grup, 2025.
- Mann, Rachel. —On 'Making Nothing Happen': The Apophatic Power of Poetry and the Poetic Power of Silence. *Modern Believing* 65, no. 2 (2024): 134–43. <https://doi.org/10.3828/mb.2024.10>.

⁹⁷ Jon M. Sweeney and Mark S. Burrows, *Meister Eckhart's Book of Secrets: Meditations on Letting Go and Finding True Freedom* (Hampton Roads Publishing Company, Inc, 2019), tit. Why Love is Best.

- McGinn, Bernard. *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart: The Man from Whom God Hid Nothing*. The Edward Cadbury Lectures 2000–2001. Crossroad Pub, 2001.
- Nelson, James B. *Embodiment: An Approach to Sexuality and Christian Theology*. Augsburg Pub. House, 1979.
- Olsman, Erik. —Resonance in a Theopoetics of Practice in Practical Theology. *International Journal of Practical Theology* 26, no. 2 (2022): 311–28. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijpt-2021-0031>.
- Olthuis, James H. *Dancing in the Wild Spaces of Love: A Theopoetics of Gift and Call, Risk and Promise*. 1st ed. Currents in Reformational Thought Series. Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2022.
- Pamungkas, dir. *Pamungkas - I Love You But I'm Letting Go*. 2018. 03:43. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NO_cVedXdmM.
- Rambo, Shelly. *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining*. 1st ed. Westminster John Knox Press, 2010.
- Roy, Louis. *Mystical Consciousness: Western Perspectives and Dialogue with Japanese Thinkers*. State University of New York Press, 2003.
- Sapphire, Aurellia. *Avoidant vs. Anxious: Bertahan Atau Lepaskan*. 1st ed. Mediakita, 2025.
- Steiner, Rudolf. *Mystics of the Renaissance: Their Relation to Modern Thought*. Knickerbocker Press, 1911.
- SuaraKita.org, Redaksi. —Revolusi Cinta: Attachment Style Dan Transformasi ‘Aku-Dia’ Menjadi ‘Kita’ Bagi LGBTQ+ Di Era Digital. *SuaraKita*, June 27, 2025. <https://suarakita.org/2025/06/revolusi-cinta-attachment-style-dan-transformasi-aku-dia-menjadi-kita-bagi-lgbtq-di-era-digital/>.
- Sweeney, Jon M., and Mark S. Burrows. *Meister Eckhart's Book of Secrets: Meditations on Letting Go and Finding True Freedom*. Hampton Roads Publishing Company, Inc, 2019.
- Tamawiwiy, August Corneles. —May The Force Be With You: Jejak Teopoetika dalam Film Star Wars. *In Teologi Budaya Populer di Ruang Publik Indonesia*, 1st ed. Yayasan Taman Pustaka Kristen Indonesia bekerja sama dengan Fakultas Teologi Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana, 2025.
- Tamawiwiy, August Corneles. —Teopoetika: Sebuah Teologi Yang Tidak Pantas. *Indonesian Journal of Theology* 12, no. 1 (2024): 23–48. <https://doi.org/10.46567/ijt.v12i1.463>.
- Taylor, Mark C. *After God*. Paperback ed. Religion and Postmodernism. University of Chicago Press, 2009.
- Walton, Heather. —A Theopoetics of Practice: Re-Forming in Practical Theology: Presidential Address to the International Academy of Practical Theology, Eastertide 2017. *International Journal of Practical Theology* 23, no. 1 (2019): 3–23. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijpt-2018-0033>.
- Walton, Heather. —Theopoetics as Challenge, Change and Creative Making. *Literature and Theology* 33, no. 3 (2019): 229–32. <https://doi.org/10.1093/litthe/frz030>.
- Wattimena, Reza A. A. *Untuk Semua yang Beragama: Agama dalam Pelukan Filsafat, Politik, dan Spiritualitas*. PT Kanisius, 2020.

Josua Estomih Butarbutar, Letting Go To Become Whole, Celebrating The Love Sorrow: Theopoetics Through the Mystical Path of Meister Eckhart in the Song