

This bar-code number lets you verify that you're getting exactly the right version or edition of a book. The digit and digit formats both work.

Guy Bennett-Hunter [Preprint version. Final version published in *Philosophy Compass* 10, 1-12] After a brief introduction, this article surveys the most important discussions of divine ineffability, observing that the literature presents two mutually-reinforcing obstacles to a coherent account of the concept, creating the impression that philosophical reflection on the subject had reached an impasse. The article goes on to survey some more recent work, which draws on the conceptual resources of existential phenomenology, pragmatism, and the later Wittgenstein. It shows that this work has made possible a new philosophical account of divine ineffability that surmounts the obstacles, overcomes the impasse and makes divine ineffability, once again, a live option in philosophy of religion. The article concludes with some brief remarks on how this alternative approach reflects recent trends in the discipline as a whole and has the potential to make a valuable contribution to live research questions in epistemology of religion. I Largely neglected by philosophers, the thought that God is incomprehensible, and that the divine nature therefore eludes literal linguistic articulation, is a commonplace in the Christian mystical tradition, especially in the works of writers at the fringes of orthodoxy, such as Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite fl. Such thinkers are part of what is known as the apophatic tradition, practitioners of negative theology. Many such theologians have preferred to restrict themselves to negative statements about what God is not, thinking that such statements are less prone to error than positive ones. With a few notable exceptions, mainstream theologians tend to be wary of this apparently inauspicious theological point of departure and, if they do, they tend to be wary of it. [Preprint version. In what follows, I summarize the most important of those discussions, considering their implications for contemporary philosophical reflection on divine ineffability. In particular, I highlight two major obstacles to making philosophical sense of the idea, before considering an alternative approach that may help to surmount those obstacles. He begins the paper by quoting several versions of the claim that God is ineffable, as it is found in various religious and philosophical traditions. Alston interprets the meaning of this claim, after W. Stace, in the following way: Thus to the intellect He is blank, void, nothing. This is because its content, the assertion that God cannot be described, is apparently contradicted by its logical form, which seems to imply that God cannot be described. The problem is generally agreed to be insoluble and, in apparent reaction to it, later discussions including the one carried out by Alston himself Perceiving God have taken a different course, applying the concept of ineffability to objects other than God. This fourth, Jamesian option is the one that Alston appears to prefer in his early work. Arguments from mysticism of this kind can be seen as reacting to the supposedly insoluble problem of self-stultification. In an important but neglected paper in the field, David Cooper summarizes this line of argument in a way that brings out the inseparability of our first obstacle the apparently self-refuting nature of the claim that God is ineffable from the second: After helpfully distinguishing divine ineffability from other, more familiar and prosaic forms, Cooper sets out the implications of the self-stultification problem for discussions of divine ineffability: What we are assuming to be ineffable is not God himself, but experiences of him. Clearly there is much we can say about him. He is one, perfect, omniscient, and so on. This is enough to support the claim that it is experiential encounters with him, and not something else, which are ineffable. But, as Cooper argues, it is not clear that the God of reason is as articulable as the argument requires. But, in fact, this response gets us no further: The problem assumed earlier was precisely the ineffability of God as an object of experience. The idea, a short while ago, was to blunt the edge of this problem by appeal to the God of [reason], a being about whom we could say enough to explain his experiential ineffability. Clearly that idea falls apart once we concede that sense can be made of this being only via experiences of him. The circle would be complete: Clearly this antinomy which problematizes the possibility of securing reference to an ineffable God and the problem of making sense, instead, of an ineffable experience of God are deeply interconnected and reinforce each other in the vicious circle that Cooper described. More recently, Alston has been in danger of falling into this circle, as is shown by some later work in which, contrary to his earlier position, he offers a

defence of divine ineffability. However, Alston immediately qualifies the DMT, acknowledging that it cannot be true of negative concepts, for as all apophatic theologians are well aware, we must be able to make negative statements about God, no matter how mysterious we otherwise take God to be. In addition to this relatively uncontroversial qualification, Alston believes that the self-reference problem requires him further to qualify the DMT, conceding that it cannot hold for absolutely all positive concepts. For, if it did, we would be left with no way of ensuring that our denials were directed to God, rather than to something else. In the case of God, Alston defends this possibility by appeal to the arguments in his earlier book, *Perceiving God*. But he finds that even this relatively congenial view of reference requires that some concepts are applicable to God. For how could it be the case that I directly perceive a baby, God, or anything else without thereby being able to use some of my concepts to characterize what is perceived? If it is a baby, I could say that it is chubby or emaciated, awake or asleep, and so on. If it is God, I could say that he is powerful or loving or good at communicating a certain message to me, or whatever Alston, *Divine Mystery and Our Knowledge of God I*. And, as Cooper predicted, this latter possibility requires Alston to weaken the DMT to the extent that he is forced to admit that some concepts are applicable to God after all. He does not feel forced to admit that a uniquely applicable description is applicable to God, nor to specify which concepts are applicable to God. So he reformulates his thesis so that it allows for the application of the smallest set of concepts whose true application has to be assumed in order to secure reference to God. And he clarifies that if there is more than one equally small set of concepts that fulfils this function, then the reformulated version of the DMT is compatible with only one such set being truly applicable to God. Alston only avoids getting caught up in the vicious circle by weakening his initial thesis that God is ineffable. In order to secure reference, he appeals instead to the God of direct experience. But this move cancels the original claim of ineffability, since concepts can clearly be applied to an object of the kind of experience that Alston has in mind. Either way, the strong claim of divine ineffability does not survive. But, less helpfully for the present purposes, it created the impression that arguments to divine ineffability, in explicit defence of a main implicit assumption of the Christian mystical tradition,³ had reached an impasse. III Some more recent philosophical work has revisited the concept of ineffability, applying insights not only from analytic philosophy but also from phenomenology and pragmatism to indicate that a doctrine of ineffability may yet be a live option in philosophy of religion and elsewhere. So how does this work surmount these mutually-reinforcing obstacles to divine ineffability? To start with the problem of self-stultification: Cooper maintains that the supposed contradiction between the function 6 [Preprint version. In a similar vein, A. In philosophical terms, we are dealing with what I call a tension between ineffability and answerability [reference deleted] In religious terms, this tension ramifies as the problem of the possibility of religious experience. For how could we worship the totally transcategorical? And how could [Dionysius], as a faithful Christian monk, allow the scriptures, liturgies and theologies of the church to be undercut by an unqualified divine ineffability? In the following two sections, I take a brief look at some very recent philosophical work that takes an alternative approach to this problem, pointing to a way in which this philosophical and theological tension might be resolved. If we really believed this, Cooper argues, it could not have mattered to us if the concepts and meanings with which we happen to invest the world, the commitments and decisions we happen to make, had been different. This amounts to the belief that nothing is more or less worth believing or doing than anything else, a belief with which Cooper does not think it genuinely possible to live. According to this thought, [a]bsolutists are right to insist that reality is independent of the human contribution, but wrong to suppose that this reality can be articulated. Humanists, correspondingly, are right to maintain that any discursable world is a human one, but wrong to equate reality with this world. The notion of ineffability involved is that of a reality beyond the human that is, for that reason and in principle, literally unconceptualizable and inarticulable. This notion plays the strategic role of both compensating for, without jettisoning, the recognition that the only discursable world is a human one and providing measure for human Life, something beyond itself to which that Life can answer. However some such poetries, ones that encourage a disjunctive or dualistic vision of the relation of ineffable ultimate reality to the human world, are to be criticized. Although the ultimately real must be thought of as ineffable and independent of the human perspective in order adequately to provide measure for the Lebenswelt, it would be

wrong to visualize it as disjoined from that world. In that case, we would be too prone to envisage the ineffable as a transcendent Kantian realm or a thing, like a cosmos or god, no less discursable than the human world itself because invested with at least some of the very concepts and meanings for which it was supposed to provide measure precisely by not being so invested, for example, that of existence. The Kantian position, inherited in philosophy of religion by Hick, allows, as Cooper points out, a very major exception to the general claim that the world depends for what it is on human beings for example, the a priori structures of the mind, namely, human existence itself. The question is then raised what place we ourselves could have in such a world, so much of our own making. This is simply incoherent according to the alternative, existential phenomenological view that human existence is being-in-the-world, and not even notionally separable from the world with which we are engaged. Following the vocabulary of the later Heidegger, we should think of the

10 [Preprint version. While it will be impossible to do justice to the arguments in the available space, I would like to use this final section to draw attention to some key points that I hope will guide the ongoing debate. And, from the perspectives of existential phenomenology and contemporary pragmatism, the concept of existence must be included among these [reference deleted], n. Therefore, contemporary theologians have revisited the mystical tradition, carrying out thoroughgoing critiques of ontotheology, critiques

11 [Preprint version. So, in order to understand the nature of religious experience in the light of divine ineffability, we have to contend with a very different understanding of experience: While some theologians who are sympathetic to the notion of divine ineffability have tried to account for religious experience in symbolic terms,¹¹ I have argued that this concept of symbol reinforces that unhelpful dichotomy [reference deleted] For, whereas symbols are objective realities that intend other realities whether or not these other realities exist outside the symbol and objectify them in a symbolic representation, ciphers, for Jaspers, are irreducible to either pole of the dichotomy. Finally, how might religious expression be understood in the light of divine ineffability? Broadly, I suggest that religious expression be understood as a set of linguistic and non-linguistic practices that can function as the kind of attunement of oneself and others to the ineffable that Cooper describes. This explains why we do not typically treat works of art that evoke similar emotional effects as interchangeable. I have argued that, given the notion of divine ineffability, both linguistic and non-linguistic forms of religious expression should be understood in parallel to this [reference deleted] Wittgenstein is clear that the proper explanation of

13 [Preprint version. In conclusion, these alternative perspectives on divine ineffability and on its continuing importance in philosophy of religion have not been taken in a vacuum. They are based on the idea, articulated by William James, that the experiential dimension to religion is deeply interconnected with the pragmatic dimension, much more so than with the doxastic dimension. I suggest that they also have the potential to illuminate contemporary Wittgensteinian debates about the possibility of religious certainty and the implications of those debates for understanding the nature of religious disagreement, conversion, and extremism [reference deleted], n. For all these reasons, I sincerely hope that ineffability in general, and divine ineffability in particular, will continue to attract renewed philosophical attention. The Epistemology of Religious Experience. Cornell University Press, God and Mystery in Words: Experience through Metaphor and Drama. Oxford University Press, The Measure of Things: Humanism, Humility and Mystery. At the Frontiers of Faith and Reason. Contributions to Philosophy From Enowning. Indiana University Press,

2: Divine Ineffability | Guy Bennett-Hunter - www.enganchecubano.com

With one of the largest book inventories in the world, find the book you are looking for. To help, we provided some of our favorites. With an active marketplace of over million items, use the Alibris Advanced Search Page to find any item you are looking for. Through the Advanced Search Page, you.

Papal Infallibility Becomes Dogma by Michael Whelton On September 8th, , Pope Clement XI issued a Bull, Unigenitus, which among other things condemned the proposition that reading of the bible is for everyone, 1 and seemed to exalt the efficacy of grace to the point of destroying liberty. It also appeared to limit the Church to the predestined only. This Papal Bull almost brought France to the brink of schism 3 and the Austrian Emperor forbade the Bull Unigenitus in his territories. Sicilian seminaries were teaching their students that General Councils were supreme over the Pope and were using Unigenitus to show how Popes could err. In , Bishop Baines, Vicar Apostolic in England, wrote that Bellarmine and some other divines, chiefly Italians, have believed the Pope infallible, when proposing ex cathedra an article of faith. Some of the questions put to Roman Catholic Bishops are as follows: Question to Bishop Doyle Q: Is the authority of the Pope in spiritual matters absolute or limited? Questions to Bishop Murray Q: Is that Papal authority under the control of General Councils? That authority is limited by the councils and canons of the Church; he is the executive power of the Church, appointed to preside over it and enforce its canons or laws. Those canons vest in individuals, for instance in Bishops, certain rights, which of course is the duty of the Pope to protect and not violate; his authority is thus limited by those canons. Does it justify an objection that is made to Catholics that their allegiance is divided? Their allegiance in civil matters is completely undivided. The Roman Catholic doctrine in respect to Bulls from the Pope is that they are always to be treated with respect; but if those Bulls or Rescripts proceeding from the Pope do contain doctrines or matters which are not compatible with the discipline of the particular Church to which they may be directed, they feel it their duty then to remonstrate respectfully, and not to receive the regulations that may emanate from the Pope. Can you state in what respect the national canons received in Ireland, or any particular construction put upon the general canons, differ from those which are received in other countries? For instance, a particular church, or the canons of a particular church, might define that the authority of a general council was superior to that of the Pope: Such canon may be received, for instance in Ireland or France, and might not be received in Italy or Spain. Question to Bishop Murray Q: Is the decree of the Pope valid without the consent of the Council? A decree of the Pope in matters of doctrine is not considered binding on Catholics, if it have not the consent of the whole Church, either dispersed or assembled by its Bishops in Council. Louis pointed out in his undelivered speech, which he had published in Naples, that for two hundred years a book had been in circulation entitled Roman Catholic Principles in Reference to God and the King. It enjoyed such a wide circulation that from to it underwent 35 editions and the Very Reverend Vicar Apostolic Coppinger in England had 12 printings of it. On the question of Papal Infallibility it states: It is no matter of faith to believe that the Pope is in himself infallible, separated from the Church, even in expounding the faith: One of the most popular catechisms circulating in 19th century England was the Controversial Catechism by the Reverend Stephen Keenan. On page we find the following question and answer: Must not Catholics believe the Pope in himself to be infallible? This is a Protestant invention; it is no article of the Catholic faith; no decision of his can oblige, under pain of heresy, unless it be received and enforced by the teaching body; that is, by the bishops of the Church. This catechism carries the enthusiastic approbation of four bishops: By The Right Rev. A concise summary of arguments, authorities, and proofs, in support of the doctrines, institutions and practices of the Catholic Church, is here presented in a very convenient form, as an additional antidote against the unceasing effusions of antagonistic Ignorance and MisrepresentationThe work I trust will meet with the notice it deserves, and the good be thus effected which the zealous and talented author has had in view of its publication. Edinburgh, 10th April, Edinburgh, 14th November, By the Right Rev. I have read, with much pleasure, a work entitled Controversial Catechism, by the Rev. As it contains a well-reasoned defense of the Catholic faith, and clear and satisfactory solutions of the usual objections adduced by separatists, I deem that the study of it will be most useful to all Catholics; and,

therefore, I earnestly recommend it to the Faithful in the Northern District of Scotland. Glasgow, 19th November, My Dear Mr. Keenan, I am exceedingly delighted to learn that a third edition of your excellent Controversial Catechism is about to be printed. You request my approbation of this New Edition. Most willingly and most heartily do I give it. But it is really altogether unnecessary, for the work has amply approved itself. The rapid exhaustion of the last two editions is more than sufficient proof of the value and worth of the Catechism. I know not, indeed, if we possess a better volume adapted to the wants of the time; As long as the Controversial Catechism is to be had, it is entirely the fault of all Catholics - be their rank however humble - if they be not ready on all occasions to give a reason of the faith and hope that are in them. The rapid sale of the former edition - its approbation by many Clergyman in Scotland and by several in Ireland and England - the fact of its appearing in a very elegant American edition, approved by the Right Rev. Hughes of New York, and by the American Catholic Clergy and Catholic press - combined with the antipathy of modern religionists to its publication or circulation, and the unwilling testimony wrung from them as to its efficacy in supporting truth, - all these motives, strengthened by a desire to put down error and establish truth, have induced the Author to give the public a second edition Thus here in mid-nineteenth century Britain and America we have a very popular Catholic Catechism claiming the notion of Papal Infallibility as evidence of Protestant deceit or ignorance. As we have seen, this was not an article of faith that the universal church has always confessed. Pius had already tested infallibility when, in , he declared the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of, which some of them bishops dreaded and some opposed, but which all submitted when he had decreed without the intervention of a Council. In his youth and well into his thirties he suffered epileptic seizures. For a while he was allowed to celebrate mass only on the condition that another priest or deacon was present. Nothing more is heard of this condition in his later life, however, according to his contemporaries the traces of the Popes epilepsy were visible, in that the right side of his body was slightly less developed than the left. This could be seen even in his face which was asymmetric, with lips awry and a head that inclined to the right. Pius IX was the longest reigning pope, possessing personal charm and enjoying great popularity. He was also considered highly impressionable, capricious, impulsive and unpredictable. These characteristics were attributed to his epilepsy. At the First Vatican Council the approval of the passing of Papal Infallibility was almost guaranteed from the beginning. First, by the incredibly unequal representation which was highlighted during the Council by a pamphlet, whose author was believed to be Georges Darboy, Archbishop of Paris entitled, *The Liberty of the Council and the Infallibility*. This pamphlet claimed that while Italy had two hundred and seventy bishops, the rest of Europe had only two hundred and sixty-five. Closer scrutiny reveals that twelve million German Roman Catholics were represented by nineteen bishops while seven hundred thousand inhabitants of the Papal States were represented by sixty-two. It is little wonder that the German bishops who formed the backbone of the anti-Infallibilist complained of being overwhelmed by Italian and Sicilian bishops. A measure of his resolve is the statement he made to the chief editor of *La Civiltà Cattolica*, My mind is so made up that if need be I shall take the definition upon myself and dismiss the Council if it wishes to keep silence. Mozley, special correspondent to *The Times* of London writes that bishops who adopted a neutral or moderate line: They find it vain to declare their devotion or their sincerity. His Holiness tells them plainly they are not on his side; they are among his enemies; they are damaging the good cause; their loyalty is not sound. It is enough that they have signed what they should not, or not signed what they ought. My children do not abandon me. Just before the final vote on Papal Infallibility, a deputation of minority bishops implored Pius IX to accept certain concessions in the wording of the declaration: Ketteler threw himself on his knees and with tears in his eyes said: Good Father, save us and save the Church of God! Pauls reproof to St. Peter when he, withstood him to his face, Gal. Irenaeus stern rebuke to Pope St. Victor over the Easter controversy see Chapter II. Cardinal Guidi, Archbishop of Bologna, in a speech before the Council said that, while accepting infallibility, he urged the Pope to take the counsel of his bishops before issuing decisions as this is the tradition of the Church. Guidis speech was reported to the Pope and he was sent for and scolded. The surprised Cardinal responded that he was only maintaining that bishops are witnesses of tradition. That at the final stages he exerted his personal influence to the utmost cannot be questioned, for it was quite open. Dom Butler admits to the Popes control over the Council when he writes, In all things the

Pope kept to himself the complete mastery. Things which at Trent had been left in the hands of the Fathers - settlement of claims to take part in the Council, appointment of officials, regulation of procedure, etc. But such proposals or postulations must be submitted to a special Congregation, nominated by the Pope, for dealing with such postulates, to consider them and report its advice to the Pope, with whom the decision would lie as to whether the thing be brought forward at the Council or not. To Professor Joseph Hubert Reinkens, Strossmeyer said, that the Vatican Council had not had the freedom necessary to make it a true Council and to justify its passing resolutions binding the conscience of the entire Catholic world. The proof of this was perfectly self-evident. It comes from our lack of freedom, which is radical. An imposing minority, representing the faith of more than one hundred million Catholics, that is, almost half of the entire Church, is crushed beneath the yoke of a restrictive agenda, which contradicts conciliar traditions. It is crushed by commissions which have not been truly elected and which dare to insert undebated paragraphs in the text after debate has closed. It is crushed by the commission for postulates, which has been imposed from above. It is crushed by the absolute absence of discussion, response, objections, and the opportunity to demand explanations; The minority is crushed, above all, by the full weight of the supreme authority which oppresses it 26 Furthermore, the opposing minority of about two hundred bishops objected to the short time allowed for studying the text on primacy and infallibility as well as to the practice adopted by the deputations of inserting new clauses at the last moment. The minority bishops were not allowed to discuss the historical objections against Papal Infallibility with the deputation on the faith. The papers were retrieved and brought to the attention of Vatican officials. The price for this gesture was extracted three years later, when he was dismissed as Bishop of Montpellier. Sixty-two bishops, many of whom were de facto opponents, voted with reservations, with only four hundred and fifty-one giving a clear yes - this is less than half of the one thousand and eighty-four prelates with voting privileges and less than two-thirds of the seven hundred bishops in attendance at the commencement of the Council. Over seventy-six bishops in Rome abstained from voting and fifty-five bishops informed the Pope that while maintaining their opposition to the definition that out of filial piety and reverence, which very recently brought our representatives to the feet of your Holiness, do not allow us in a cause so closely concerning Your Holiness to say non placet it is not pleasing openly in the face of the Father. Thus lacking a moral unanimity or even a clear two-thirds majority, Papal Infallibility was now elevated as an article of faith equal to the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation. A belief that could not possibly meet the Vincentian canon of Universality, Antiquity and Consent, and in fact a belief not universally shared by Catholics even within living memory of the Council that solemnly defined it. Years later, Orthodox theologian Sergei Bulgakov, observed with disdain that, The Vatican Council has as much right to call itself a Council as today's meetings of delegates from the Soviet republics can claim to be a free expression of the will of the people. New Catholic Encyclopedia, page , Vol. A Defence of the Christian Religion, page , Bath, Gladstone, Vaticanism page 48, I, pages , , ,

3: December | | Will the Real God Step Forward

Didn't find what you're looking for? Try adding this search to your want list. Millions of books are added to our site everyday and when we find one that matches your search, we'll send you an e-mail. Best of all, it's free. A special order item has limited availability and the seller may source.

This essay provides an overview of the ways in which contemporary philosophers have tried to make sense of ineffability as encountered in aesthetic contexts. Section 1 sets up the problem of aesthetic ineffability by putting it into historical perspective. Section 2 specifies the kinds of questions that may be raised with regard to aesthetic ineffability, as well as the kinds of answer each one of those questions would require. Section 3 investigates arguments that seek to locate aesthetic ineffability within the object of aesthetic experiences, i. Section 4 discusses arguments that seek to locate aesthetic ineffability within the subject of aesthetic experience. Within philosophical sub-fields, the concept of ineffability has been particularly prominent in aesthetics and the philosophy of art. What would have to be the case for us to be able to? Section 1 sets up the problem of aesthetic ineffability by putting it into historical perspective and clarifying some key concepts. Section 2 specifies the kinds of questions that may be raised with regard to aesthetic 1 Aesthetic experiences do not necessarily presuppose the presence of a work of art: For the sake of simplicity, I will restrict the examples of my argument to aesthetic experiences afforded by works of art. However, all arguments that will be discussed can potentially be applied to aesthetic experiences in nature as well. For some recent discussion of environmental aesthetics, see for example: Berleant , ; Brady , ; Carlson ; Parsons a and b; and Saito Silvia Jonas ineffability, as well as the kinds of answer each one of those questions would require. The conclusion summarizes the current state of the debate and indicates the most promising directions for further research on aesthetic ineffability. Already in the ancient writings of Gorgias we find an argument with a substantial ineffability thesis about some aspects of reality Sextus Empiricus 7. Language, 59 , Adorno Hegel, , and Wittgenstein e. But what exactly does it mean to say that an artwork is ineffable? What is the relevant notion of ineffability in this context? After all, something can be ineffable for trivial reasons, i. If so, only literal or also metaphorical? Or is art perhaps a language of its own? A person with significant knowledge of art? A professional art critic? The concept of aesthetic ineffability used in this essay denotes a kind of ineffability that is a absolute, i. A bit more formally, 3 Silvia Jonas An aesthetic item y [e. I believe that they best reflect the way aesthetic ineffability is intuitively understood. The way the concept is used in the literature see the section on history above and sections suggests that aesthetic ineffability is commonly thought of as universal, i. The focus on natural-language ineffability is justified by the same reasoning, in addition to the technical factor that it is not at all clear what the semantics of a non-linguistic language would look like “ a question that would need to be clarified before an investigation of aesthetic ineffability could even get started. The focus on literal language is necessary in order to exclude an interpretation of aesthetic ineffability according to which every piece of literature or poetry trivially expresses itself. Intuitively, an expression captures the full content of whatever is expressed, whereas a description usually covers only parts. This leads us straight to the next question: One important distinction that needs to be mentioned is the distinction between propositional and non-propositional content. The content of a sentence is propositional, whereas the content of a perceptual experience is non-propositional. Poetry is an essentially propositional art form, painting an essentially non-propositional one, pop music is a hybrid. The question of aesthetic ineffability can also be understood as the question whether some works of art have a meaning that goes beyond the sum of its propositional and perceptual components. Before we can proceed to a discussion of the main accounts that have so far been put forth, we must identify the different possible questions that may be asked with regard to aesthetic ineffability. Works of art are often perceived as expressive,⁶ and hence, as having content. In order to discriminate between the content of works of art and other types of content, such as propositional content or the content of ordinary perceptual experience, the content of works of art is referred to as aesthetic content. What distinguishes aesthetic content from other types of content is that it can evoke a feeling of meaningfulness, i. This is just a different way of saying that the meaning of a work of art is perceived as more than a combination

of its propositional and perceptual components, which in turn suggests that aesthetic content is inextricably linked to its respective form of presentation: In this sense, aesthetic content can be said to be ineffable. In addition to having content, works of art also afford experiences. In order to discriminate between ordinary perceptual experiences and experiences afforded by 6 There is no agreement over the question whether all artworks, including conceptual or performance art, are expressive, and whether aesthetic experiences of natural settings require nature to be expressive. Object-based accounts of aesthetic ineffability must presuppose the expressiveness of all artworks and natural settings in order to explain aesthetic ineffability. Subject-based accounts are better equipped to accommodate the intuition that only some aesthetic experiences are due to the presence of an expressive artwork or natural setting see below. As mentioned in section 1, answering such a question would require a clear account of non-linguistic semantics based on which we can decide whether or not two works of art express the same content. Since there are no such accounts, every answer to the question whether or not different works of art can express the same content would be mere speculation. What distinguishes aesthetic experiences from other types of experience is that they often involve a specific state of mind that is impossible to put into language: The reason it is important to point out the difference between aesthetic experience and aesthetic content is that aesthetic ineffability could either be a matter of a specific type of ineffable content, or a matter of a specific type of ineffable state of mind. There are thus two principal directions for an investigation of the ineffability associated with aesthetic contexts: In addition to these two principal directions, we need to get a clear picture of the possible questions that may be raised with regard to aesthetic ineffability. For an overview of the debate about the ineffability of qualia, see Jonas Chs. In order to answer this question, an account has to provide an explanation of ineffability that applies only to aesthetic contexts. Moreover, such an account would have to apply uniformly to all instances of aesthetic ineffability: It is not at all clear that it is possible to develop a uniform account that ranges across such a disparate assortment of things. However, on the non-trivial assumption that experiences of aesthetic ineffability are phenomenally similar even though the respective artistic genre may differ, it would be desirable for any theory to provide a uniform explanation of aesthetic ineffability independently of artistic genres. A third question that could be raised is why the ineffability we experience in aesthetic contexts feels meaningful. This is an extremely important question, given that it is the aspect of meaningfulness that distinguishes aesthetic ineffability from other, more trivial forms of ineffability such as the ineffability of our ordinary perceptual experiences. Ideally, a theory of aesthetic ineffability should address all three of the above mentioned questions, thus providing a an explanation of the untranslatability of aesthetic content that b applies uniformly to all and only instances of aesthetic ineffability that c explains our evaluation of that ineffability as meaningful. In fact, however, most accounts of aesthetic ineffability address only a subset of those questions, and as was mentioned above it is not clear that one uniform account could ever answer all three questions. We will now examine each account with regard to the questions identified above, starting with accounts that locate aesthetic ineffability within the object of an 8 Silvia Jonas aesthetic experience section 3. We will then proceed to accounts that locate aesthetic ineffability within the subject of an aesthetic experience section 4. A Matter of Aesthetic Content? The most straightforward way to explain the ineffability found in aesthetic contexts is to invoke an intrinsic difference between aesthetic and linguistic content. Arguments of this kind are based on two premises. The first premise is that aesthetic content is in some vaguely specified way intrinsically different from linguistic content. From these two premises, the conclusion is inferred that aesthetic content cannot be translated into linguistic content. Arguments to this effect have been provided, for example, by Susanne Langer and John Dewey. Such knowledge is not expressible in ordinary discourse. The reason for this ineffability is not that the ideas to be expressed are too high, too spiritual, or too anything-else, but that the forms of feeling and the forms of discursive expression are logically incommensurate, so that any exact concepts of feeling and emotion cannot be projected into the logical form of literal language. Similarly, Dewey argues that works of art manage to express what is unavailable in language. There are values and meanings that can be expressed only by immediately visible and audible qualities, and to ask what they mean in the sense of something that can be put into words is to deny their distinctive existence. The crucial question now is how this alleged additional expressive power should be explained: If so, no arguments to this effect

have been developed. The mysterious expressiveness of aesthetic content has more often been declared than properly argued for. What has been argued for, on the other hand, is that the expressive power of aesthetic content trivially surpasses that of language. This is because we can never experience a proposition in the way we can experience a work of art: Pictures have colour, depth, balance, chiaroscuro, design; propositions do not. Poems have measured rhythm and rhyme, striking images and involved metaphors; ordinary prose statements do not. In other words, the means of aesthetic expression trivially outstrip those of linguistic expression: A colour or a tone cannot be rendered in language, just like a protractor cannot draw square circles.

Kennick, *Art*, There is no mystery here, only a category mistake. For this reason, Stephen Davies argues that we should resist the temptation to think that works of art communicate ineffable truths. Kennick and Davies thus maintain that aesthetic content is ineffable for the same trivial reasons other phenomenal experiences are ineffable, and that arguments trying to establish a difference between aesthetic ineffability and ordinary phenomenal ineffability are misguided. However, such a view fails to make sense of the meaningfulness associated with aesthetic ineffability in contradistinction to ordinary instances of ineffability: If we are to believe in a genuine difference between aesthetic and ordinary perceptual content, we must be given a substantial explanation for this difference. John Spackman and Diana Raffman argue that the expressive qualities of some works of art, especially in music, are more fine-grained than our conceptual resources. According to Spackman, this is because the number of potential connections we can make between a given work of art on the one hand, and the human emotions that can be argued to be expressed by it on the other, is likely to be higher than those specified in any actual description.

Spackman However, this should not lead us to conclude that every single work of art expresses one unique emotion, given that we can think of cases where two works of art differ slightly with regard to their perceptual qualities without differing with regard to the emotion they express. Spackman argues only for a moderate ineffability claim: Raffman develops a different argument for the fine-grained-ness of aesthetic content , More precisely, Raffman argues 83ff. Moreover, as Raffman herself concedes Thus, her argument provides no reason to believe that aesthetic content is in principle ineffable. Arguments from demonstrative concepts give us additional reason to believe that a mere fineness of grain cannot establish the kind of aesthetic ineffability we are after. It is reasonable to believe that such processes are involved in any case of language expansion. Rafael DeClercq employs a cognitive account by Michael Polanyi and Harry Prosch in order to explain the ineffability of aesthetic content in terms of the way such content functions. According to Polanyi and Prosch, the structure of perceptual awareness is twofold, i.

4: Search results for `Ineffability` - PhilPapers

The Ineffability of God - Pamphlet (Paperback) Average rating: 0 out of 5 stars, based on 0 reviews Write a review.
Stobaeus. Walmart # \$ 9. 95 \$ 9.

The target of the addresses was the heretical group known as the Anomoeans. Johannes Quasten describes the first five sermons in which Chrysostom: Their founder was Aetius, but their chief teacher Eunomius, from who they were also called Eunomians. Chrysostom castigates their blasphemous arrogance which dares to confine God to the limits of human reason and to empty out the mystery of divine essence. He defends the ineffable, inconceivable and incomprehensible nature of God against these rationalistic tendencies, which deny the transcendence of the Christian religion. At the same time he points out the co-equality of the Son with the Father. The argument is not over whether man is able to know anything true about God. There are knowable and certain truths about God that man may confidently cling to. There are two main questions in the debate. Can man know God completely? Can man know everything there is to know about God? A first grader flies through simple addition problems and says he knows math. But give him a calculus book and see how far he gets. Secondly, and closely related, can man know God in His essence? As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. The content of paragraph 19 is crucial to understanding the entire discussion of the knowledge of God. I, too, know many things but I do not know how to explain them. I know that God is everywhere and I know that he is everywhere in his whole being. But I do not know how he is everywhere. I know that he is eternal and has no beginning. But I do not know how. My reason fails to grasp how it is possible for an essence to exist when that essence has receives its existence neither from itself nor from another. I know that he begot the Son. I know that the Spirit is from him. But I do not know how the Spirit is from him. God has revealed truth that can be known, but God cannot be comprehended. Until and unless this distinction is understood progression in this debate is impossible. Moments later 21 Chrysostom offers some a jaw dropping bit of logic that simultaneously eviscerates the position of his opponents and supports his interpretation of 1 Cor. If man has perfect knowledge of God now; and in the future that knowledge will pass away; then what knowledge will there be left to had? It is only his position, that imperfect knowledge will pass away, that makes sense of the passage. Chrysostom then begins a discussion of the Scriptural evidence to support the proposition that God is incomprehensible Paul rhapsodizes that the judgments and ways of God are inscrutable and unsearchable Rom. The rewards of God are unimaginable 1 Cor. The peace of God passes understanding Phil. The gift of God is indescribable 2 Cor. Chrysostom concludes the discussion, What are you heretics saying? His judgments are inscrutable, his ways are unsearchable, his peace surpasses all understanding, his gift is indescribable, what God has prepared for those who love him has not entered into the heart of man, his greatness has no bound, his understanding is infinite. Are all these incomprehensible while only God himself can be comprehended? What excessive madness would it be to say that? In concluding the first sermon, Chrysostom again asserts his desire to win back heretics to the true faith but warns his hearers that they must shun those who show persistence in pursuing error As mentioned earlier, this type of discussion necessarily enters multiple fields. Could such a God even be considered God in any meaningful sense? Along these lines, a vivid quote is provided in a footnote from Gregory of Nyssa describing the man who approaches God: He finds himself, as it were, on a steep cliff. In fact, let us imagine a smooth and precipitous rock whose bulk sinks down into the sea to a limitless depth and raises up its ridge on high, whose summit plunges down from its brink into a yawning abyss. Since this soul no longer has anything on which to take holdâ€”neither place, not time, nor measure, nor anything elseâ€”it no longer finds any support for its thoughts. As it feels that what is incomprehensible is slipping away on all sides, the soul is gripped by dizziness and it has no way to get out of its difficulty. Spectrum Publishers, , The Catholic University of America Press, ,

5: Ineffability - Wikipedia

The Ineffability of God. January 13, A A A. Nicholas Lash, in a deeply insightful essay on God and unbelief, suggests that the God that atheists reject is often.

And what have I now said, my God, my life, my holy joy? And woe to him who keeps silent about you, since many babble on and say nothing. Human words used by humans fail in the presence of the divine, and whatever can be said is only approximation, and most human discourse fails to say anything of God at all, despite endless loquacious efforts. Now for a rhetorician as polished as Augustine to admit failure in a matter of rhetoric is a striking thing more than a rhetorical device here, and not without significance, as most experienced readers of Augustine will always have felt. For all the clarity and definition that Augustine can give to his writing elsewhere, it cannot be without significance that at the center of his concerns lies this finally unsayable Other, who eludes all his attempts to define and delimit. What I propose to outline here is not systematic. A whole book could and should be written on this theme. These remarks are rather heuristic and occasional, the fruit of spending my adult life reading and rereading Augustine, trying to do justice to him. Isidore of Seville said that the man who claims to have read all of Augustine is a liar and now, having indeed turned over all those pages and passed my eyes over all those words, I know and feel the truth of that more than ever. It is useful to begin by looking at the narrative Augustine gives in the Confessions of his discovery of his God. The questions the Manichees pressed hardest and with best effect on the adolescent Augustine were these: The short answers to these questions were simple: God is good, God is spirit, God is just. The first encounter with the books of the Platonists, [[8]] revealed to him a God who was not like the all-penetrating sea soaking into the sponge of material creation, but instead a spirit. The final stage in that revelation came on second look at the Platonists, when the doctrine of evil as a privation of good made itself understood to him, and he could see that all that was created was good, and thus that the creator himself was good. I think we need to do Augustine the favor of allowing that the questions that long plagued him did indeed speak to the heart of his religious experience of the divine, and that when he had removed those obstacles and in removing them found a way to a God who was not a phantasma but a real and true God. I mind particularly that the spiritual nature of God is associated for Augustine with divine immutability. I do not see that we have an adequate study of the theme in Augustine, though many writers have commented on its centrality to his thought. Similarly, the divine justice leads to an easy acceptance of what is scarcely an exclusively Christian principle, that God cares for and guides the affairs of the created, material world. Though God is everywhere, though God watches over and cares for humankind, though God hears human prayers, the response is to every mortal ear silence. For a God whose mediator to humankind is the incarnate Word, this is remarkable, until we realize that for Augustine the continuing incarnation of the Word is twofold: A modern must make a special effort that a late antique Christian would not have had to make to realize that the pages of scripture were for Augustine the source of the living, spoken Word of God, mediated into sound by the voice of the bishop, or the deacon, or by whatever reader of the scriptural text, a text rarely encountered in silence. Each of the few paragraphs that follow could easily be a monograph in itself. My aim in bringing them together and in keeping the scope so limited is precisely to emphasize the connections. Augustine against the pagans, the Donatists, the Manichees, the Pelagians -- Augustine the endlessly polemical -- is a figure we find sometimes unsympathetic precisely for what seems so negative about his engagements with his fellow Christians. And if we insist on breaking him up into the subject of disparate scholarly monographs according to his polemical targets, that partial and limited view of him will I think always make him seem less than he was. My sense, after long frequentation with his works, is that there we miss something valuable when we do that, and that if we can, here at least briefly, bring together the various sides of Augustine in view of the points I have already made, we can get an idea of a way forward, a way to restore to Augustine a unity of purpose and a dignity of intention that he seems sometimes to have lost in recent generations. Augustine speaks against you of the unity and spirituality of his God, his ubiquity, and his timelessness -- and thus of a God who is not the exclusive property of anyone, who forms no closed community, no sect, no cult, but who is in fact accessible to one and

all. But Christian community often fractured itself in various ways. The Manichees had their own doctrines, the Donatists their own sense of their special purity and separateness, the Pelagians their own sense of their moral superiority. The Donatists, particularly, appeal to a political engagement, the Pelagians to a moral one. Both issues have been heavily ventilated in the last thirty years, though both seem to me susceptible of further investigation. Here I will suggest one theme. The Donatists made no show of toleration or inclusiveness. They were the party of the saved in Africa, and if the rest of the world was largely unsaved, that was no business of theirs. And they were not without their own coercion. Relatively few individuals, certainly far fewer individuals than in any modern western society, were fully free in their choice of communities. The Donatists were an army of the saved, and an army that had swollen its ranks largely by a kind of benign conscription. If you lived in a Donatist town, or if you were a client of a Donatist patron on the land, you had little choice. When he finally came to invoke imperial authority, with all the reservations and hesitations that marked that process, and with all the punctilio that marked relations down to the conference of , he did so in the name of a style of Christianity that was far more inclusive, whose God was just but not arbitrary, whose God was good, and whose God lay beyond the capacity of a single community to capture him for themselves. So similarly, the Pelagians used moral superiority, the icy self- control of the ancient aristocrat, as a defining mechanism to separate themselves from their fellow Christians of lesser virtue. Augustine on the other hand, found his God everywhere. More important, he knew the difference between God and man: If there is a lingering "pagan" stripe to the Donatism and Pelagianism Augustine attacked, it comes from their ability to believe that sufficient excellence, adequate resemblance to the divine, was within human reach. Not so for Augustine, whose God is so lofty, so good, so utterly unlike ordinary mortals, that it is only by dint of great generosity that -- for all human excellences -- it is even possible to talk of salvation. Accordingly, the gap between the most virtuous and the least virtuous member of the community was first of all easily bridged, [[22]] in both directions, for good and for ill. For him the qualities he venerated were clearly those of his God, not of ordinary people. Religion made a marvelous difference -- though, to be sure, Augustine is not quite the patron of the cult of the saints that those who came after him in the west would be -- but that difference had its limits. Reformation according to the image and likeness of God never bridged the chasm, [[23]] and never gave any group of human beings "bragging rights" over against any other. Even those who stood outside the sacramental community of the church merited respect as prospective members or as recipients of yet-hidden grace of God. It is ironic and appropriate that the image of the Manichees, who drove Augustine to reflect on his ideas of God and seek out the Christian orthodoxy that finally separated him from them decisively, never quite left Augustine alone. The very last words Augustine ever wrote in his opus imperfectum contra Iulianum attack not Pelagianism but Manicheism -- arguing that it is Julian, not Augustine, who shows signs of the gnostic taint. We are inclined to take this either too seriously as a sign of a bad conscience or not seriously enough. My own view is that Augustine fully shook off his Manicheism in every matter of doctrine, but never shook off the questions they had asked. In discovering against the Manichees the absolute overweening goodness of God and the contingent, reflected goodness of created things, Augustine succeeded in distancing himself from them, and in embracing all creation. But the chasm between God and creation that the Manichees had exploited remains in that structure of thought: What he thought and said approximated his experience, to be sure, but its imperfection ought, with due charity, to be treated as we consider the tiny deliberate imperfections that Navajo sand-painters included in their designs - - as reminders of the fallibility and imperfection of human affairs. For it often seems that Augustine has brought down on himself a surprising reproach -- that of being imperfect. But his role in the thought of later centuries and the affection relatively uncharacteristic of Augustine as we have seen for the cult of the saints grew so strong that he was unable to resist a kind of idealization in the minds of those who came after that first seemed to work to his advantage, but later, as the need for idealization ran afoul of a maturer sense of the risks implicit in such a strategy, rebounded to his seeming discredit. If we make that effort of the imagination, we can leave him in two characteristic poses: Those two Augustines, it seems to me, can and should take precedence, to all the other Augustines we know. If we can make that reformation in our sense of who he was and how he lived, then we do a better job of reading what he wrote and of going away from that to write our own lives in or out of his

tradition. For to evoke Augustine in a celebration of a century and a half of Augustinian-led education on a verdant hilltop not far from Philadelphia is to remember that the academic approach to Augustine and his texts has its limits. To know that approach in its excellences and to know its limits are both parts of the wisdom that Villanova University exists to foster. The excesses of the academic ideologies of our time are not, happily, failures of enthusiasm but errors of proportion, of not knowing where the academic inquiry becomes part of the life of a larger community. Augustine stood for, and Villanova stands for, as do at least in theory all our institutions of higher learning, a better sense of balance. To study Augustine is to use the disciplines of philology and history to uncover pieces of a long-past life, and in so doing to make possible a better life here and now.

6: The Ineffability of God | Ron Rolheiser

The ineffability of God designates his incomprehensibility. While human beings can come to some knowledge of God through reason and even more so through God's revelation, yet he continues to be incomprehensible. Some contemporary theologians have argued on the basis of God's ineffability that all.

A purportedly super sense-perceptual or sub sense-perceptual experience granting acquaintance of realities or states of affairs that are of a kind not accessible by way of sense perception, somatosensory modalities, or standard introspection. We can further define the terms used in the definition, as follows: For example, a person can have a super sense-perceptual experience while watching a setting sun. The inclusion of the supersensory mode is what makes the experience mystical. In one, a subject is aware of the presence of one or more realities on which one or more states of affairs supervene. It is not necessary that at the time of the experience the subject could tell herself, as it were, what realities or state of affairs were then being disclosed to her. The realization may arise following the experience. To what extent this knowledge is alleged to come from the experience alone will be discussed below Section 8. Generally, philosophers have excluded purely para-sensual experiences such as religious visions and auditions from the mystical. The definition also excludes anomalous experiences such as out of body experiences, telepathy, precognition, and clairvoyance. All of these are acquaintance with objects or qualities of a kind accessible to the senses or to ordinary introspection, such as human thoughts and future physical events. In the wide sense, mystical experiences occur within the religious traditions of at least Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Indian religions, Buddhism, and primal religions. In some of these traditions, the experiences are allegedly of a supersensory reality, such as God or Brahman or, in a few Buddhist traditions, Nirvana, as a reality See Takeuchi, , pp. Many Buddhist traditions, however, make no claim for an experience of a supersensory reality. The unconstructed experience is thought to grant insight, such as into the impermanent nature of all things. These Buddhist experiences are sub sense-perceptual, and mystical, since thisness is claimed to be inaccessible to ordinary sense perception and the awareness of it to provide knowledge about the true nature of reality. Some Buddhist experiences, however, including some Zen experiences, would not count as mystical by our definition, involving no alleged acquaintance with either a reality or a state of affairs see Suzuki, Specifically it refers to: A purportedly super sense-perceptual or sub sense-perceptual unitive experience granting acquaintance of realities or states of affairs that are of a kind not accessible by way of sense-perception, somatosensory modalities, or standard introspection. A unitive experience involves a phenomenological de-emphasis, blurring, or eradication of multiplicity, where the cognitive significance of the experience is deemed to lie precisely in that phenomenological feature. Excluded from the narrow definition, though present in the wide one, are, for example, a dualistic experience of God, where subject and God remain strictly distinct, without any blurring of the boundaries, a Jewish kabbalistic experience of a single supernal sefirah, and shamanistic experiences of spirits. These are not mystical in the narrow sense, because not unitive experiences in any degree. This would include much of mystical experience, but also religious visions and auditions, non-mystical Zen experiences, and various religious feelings, such as religious awe and sublimity. Also included is what Friedrich Schleiermacher identified as the fundamental religious experience: Numinous experiences contrast with religious experiences that involve, for example, feelings but no alleged acquaintance with non-sensory realities or states of affairs. Categories of Mystical Experiences Mystical and religious experiences can be classified in various ways, in addition to the built-in difference between mystical super sense-perceptual and sub sense-perceptual experiences. This section notes some common classifications. When not extrovertive, we may say an experience is introvertive. A dualistic experience maintains a distinction, however tenuous, between the subject and what is disclosed. Thus, theistic experiences are ordinarily dualistic, retaining, at some level, a distinction between God and the mystic. Monistic experiences are the extreme of unitive experiences, in that they dissolve all duality. They are either experiences of the absolute ontological oneness of everything, so that in a deep sense the distinctions are illusory, or are pure conscious experiences. Christian mystics have variously described union with the Divine. Generally, medieval Christian mysticism had at least

three stages, variously described, in the union-consciousness: Also, the Hasidic master, R. It is still controversial, however, as to when such declarations are to be taken as identity assertions, with pantheistic or acosmic intentions, and when they are perhaps hyperbolic variations on descriptions of union-type experiences. Non-Theurgic Mysticism In theurgic from the Greek theourgia mysticism a mystic intends to activate the divine in the mystical experience. See Shaw, , p. So they are not involved in theurgic activity. The Jewish Kabbalah is the most prominent form of theurgic mysticism. In it, the mystic aims to bring about a modification in the inner life of the Godhead see Idel, Apophatic mysticism, put roughly, claims that nothing positive can be said about objects or states of affairs which the mystic experiences. So, apophatic theology typically will be negative theology, that we can say only what God is not. Kataphatic mysticism does make claims about what the mystic experiences. Pertaining to God, this means that God can be described by positive terms. Analytic philosophers of mysticism have been working largely with kataphatic conceptions. But for an exception see Alston in the Other Internet Resources. Even the finest name is insufficient to define it. Without words, the Tao can be experienced, and without a name, it can be known. Applied to God, apophatic mysticism maintains that the experience of God can be described only by saying what God is not. Pertaining to God, kataphatic mysticism says that God can be described by positive terms. The two need not be exclusive but represent two stages, respectively, in mystical contemplation. The Attributes of Mystical Experience 3. It is not always clear, however, whether it is the experience or its alleged object, or both, that are to be ineffable. To say that X is ineffable is to say something about X, which contravenes ineffability. Several responses to this problem are possible for the mystic. One is to avoid speech altogether and remain silent about what is revealed in experience. Mystics, however, have not been very good at this. A second possibility is to say that an ineffable object has no phenomenological properties but has non-phenomenological properties Jones, An example of unsaying can be found in the endless negations in some Madyamika and Zen Buddhist meditative consciousness. Since the truth about reality "as it is" lies outside of our conceptualizations of it, we cannot say that truth, only experience it. We must then immediately negate the latter saying by saying that reality is neither not-reality nor not not-reality. See Thich Nhat Hanh, , Chapter 5. A second, theistic, example of this approach is in the negative theology of Pseudo Dionysius c. Such continuing negation points beyond discourse to experience. Similarly, Wayne Proudfoot argues that the ineffability-claim is not describing but prescribing that no language system shall be applicable to it, and so serves to create and maintain a protective sense of mystery Proudfoot, , " However, experiences of things ineffable exist in art and music see Gallope , as well as in everyday experience. Think of the impossibility of describing the taste of coffee to someone who has never tasted it. This diminishes the argument that ascriptions of ineffability are aimed at protective strategies. Grace Jantzen has advanced a critique of the emphasis on ineffability as an attempt to remove mystical experiences from the realm of rational discourse, placing them instead into the realm of the emotions Jantzen, , p. The issue of ineffability is thus tied into questions of the epistemic value of mystical experiences, to be discussed below in section 8. This may be for rhetorical effect or because of difficulty in conveying a thought without resort to linguistic tricks. See section 4 below. Insofar as mystical experience is out of the ordinary, and the unitive quality strange for ordinary folk, at least , reports of them may very well be surprising or contrary to expectation. Mystics, though, might in time find their experiences to be expected. Hence, they may be paradoxical in sense 1. Reports of mystical experiences may be paradoxical also in sense 2 , because at times mystical language does assume logically offensive forms, when actual absurdity may not be intended. However, paradox in this sense occurs less frequently in first-hand reports of mystical experiences and more in second-order mystical systems of thought Moore, , and Staal, There is no good reason for thinking that reports of mystical experience must imply logical absurdity, as in 3 or 4. The attempt to designate mystical experiences as paradoxical in senses 3 and 4 may result from being too eager to take logically deviant language at its most literal. No logical absurdity infects this description. In a different direction, Frits Staal has argued that paradoxical mystical language has been used systematically to make logically respectable claims Staal, While mystics use much literal language in describing their experiences see Alston, , " , the literality need not extend to paradox in senses 3 or 4. The next three sections present this debate among philosophers of mysticism. Such a position has occurred in psychological studies as well Taves

and Asprem, See section 6 below. Stace considers the universal introvertive experience to be a ripening of mystical awareness beyond the halfway house of the universal extrovertive consciousness. Jones argues for extrovertive experiences not being merely stunted introvertive ones, but full experiences in their own right. Marshall has developed a detailed phenomenology of extrovertive experiences. Stace assimilates theistic mystical experiences to his universal introvertive experience by distinguishing between experience and interpretation. The introvertive experience, says Stace, is the same across cultures. Theistic mystics are pressured by their surroundings, says Stace, to put a theistic interpretation on their introvertive experiences. Ninian Smart also maintained the universality of the monistic experience, arguing that descriptions of theistic mystical experiences reflect an interpretive overlay upon an experiential base common to both theistic and non-theistic experiences Smart, Stace has been strongly criticized for simplifying or distorting mystical reports For a summary, see Moore, , and for failing to properly describe the difference between extrovertive and introvertive experiences for example, Almond, , chapter 4. For example, Pike criticizes the Stace-Smart position because in Christian mysticism union with God is divided into discernible phases, which find no basis in Christian theology. These phases, therefore, plausibly reflect experience and not forced interpretation Pike, , Chapter 5. In contrast to Stace, R. Zaehner identified three types of mystical consciousness: Zaehner thought that theistic experience was an advance over the monistic, since the latter, he thought, expressed a self-centered interest of the mystic to be included in the ultimate.

7: Stobaeus. | Open Library

(4) The immutability of God is also an awesome warning that God will fulfill His Word regarding judgment for sin. God's immutability is not only a comforting assurance concerning the blessings which God has promised, but also an awesome warning that God will fulfill His Word regarding judgment for sin.

A A A Nicholas Lash, in a deeply insightful essay on God and unbelief, suggests that the God that atheists reject is often simply an idol of their own imaginations: Atheism, if it means deciding not to have anything to do with God, is thus self-contradictory and, if successful, self-destructive. The first thing that Christianity defines dogmatically about God is that God is ineffable, that is, that it is impossible to conceptualize God and that all of our language about God is more inaccurate than accurate. Our failure to understand this, perhaps more than anything else, is the reason why we struggle with faith and struggle to not fudge its demands. The problem when we try to do this is that we end up in one of two places, both not good. On the one hand, we often end up with an image of God as some superman, a person like ourselves, except wonderfully superior to us in every way. We picture God as a superhero, divine, all knowing, and all-powerful, but still ultimately like us, capable of being imagined and pictured, someone whom we can circumscribe, put a face to, and count. While this is natural and unavoidable, it leaves us, no matter how sincere we are, always, with an idol, a God created in our own image and likeness, and consequently a God who can easily and rightly be rejected by atheism. We just feel like we are. Our minds are overmatched. God is still real, still there, but our finite imaginations are coming up empty trying to picture infinite reality, tantamount to what happens when we try to imagine the highest number to which it is possible to count. The infinite cannot be circumscribed by the imagination. It has no floor and it has no ceiling, no beginning and no end. The human imagination cannot deal with that. God is infinite and, thus, by definition unimaginable and impossible to conceptualize. It cannot be pictured. However the fact that we cannot imagine God is very different than saying that we cannot know God. God can be known, even if not imagined. We all know many things that we cannot imagine, conceptualize, or articulate. God is ineffable, unimaginable, and beyond conception and language. Our faith lets us bracket this for a while and lets us picture God as some idolized super-hero. But eventually that well runs dry and our finite minds are left to know the infinite only in darkness, without images, and our finite hearts are left to feel infinite love only inside a dark trust.

8: www.enganchecubano.com: Sitemap

The ineffability of God is the favorite theme of the mystics who favor a personal mystical revelation about God. Certainly when a person, especially a nonbeliever, who seeks God inside his own mind and imagination is in danger.

Rather, He is Father by nature, in two respects: Divine Fatherhood in the Scriptures. As the question says, the Scriptures—both the Old and the New Testament the New more explicitly than the Old—take great pains to reveal God as Father. For example, there is Deuteronomy: Do you thus repay the LORD, you foolish and senseless people? Is not he your father, who created you, who made you and established you? In the New Testament, of course, it is well known that Jesus calls God his Father and instructs us to do the same. See my source for these examples. Is the reference to the Father necessary, or merely a cultural concession? The reason comes from the very nature of the Holy Trinity. He is also Son and Holy Spirit, of course. It is clear, therefore, that God is Father by nature, and calling Him so does not depend on merely cultural considerations. Order of being, order of knowledge At this point, it is useful to distinguish two aspects of this problem: It should be noted that God is perfectly ineffable; that is, we are able to know Him only to the degree that He reveals Himself to us either through His effects in creation, or through Revelation. As the Fourth Lateran Council puts it, We firmly believe and confess without reservation that there is only one true God, eternal infinite immensus and unchangeable, incomprehensible, almighty and ineffable, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; three persons indeed, but one essence, substance or nature entirely simple Canon 1 ; translation from CCC Jesus revealed that within the Godhead there is a unique relationship between himself and the Father. Trinitarian theology teaches that the relations from Father to Son and Son to Father and, of course, from the Holy Spirit to Father and Son are identical with the Persons themselves: This type of fatherhood is, of course, the very first in the order of being, and all creaturely fatherhood partakes in this one. God, as I have mentioned, is ineffable; hence even when He reveals Himself to us, He must make use of those aspects of reality that resemble Him. Indeed, things resemble Him precisely because they are effects of His creative power. As Aquinas puts it, *omne agens agit sibi simile*, every agent produces an effect similar to itself; for instance, fire makes other things hot. I mentioned that God does possess many attributes can be expressed by maternal images. The language of faith thus draws on the human experience of parents, who are in a way the first representatives of God for man. But this experience also tells us that human parents are fallible and can disfigure the face of fatherhood and motherhood No. We ought therefore to recall that God transcends the human distinction between the sexes. He is neither man nor woman: He also transcends human fatherhood and motherhood, although he is their origin and standard: However, when Jesus revealed God as Father, he did so in a way that signifies the very essence of God namely, the Father as eternally begetting the Son, and God as the creator of all things. This must not be understood in any way as a denigration of human motherhood: The question thus is better reformulated in this way: Any attempt to answer this question will necessarily enter into the realm of speculation, but presumably, it is in order that human beings, through human fatherhood, would be able to learn something about Divine Fatherhood—since that is the only way we could know about it.

9: - The Ineffability Of God - Pamphlet by Stobaeus

If the Father is God, and to be God is to be the only God because there are no other Gods, then the Father is the only true God. But this applies to anyone who is God, even the Son and the Holy Spirit; it's not exclusive, in otherwords, of God the Son, God the Holy Spirit.

Through his immanent actions within the world of time and history God reveals that he is completely other than the created order and so transcends it. As such God reveals himself as an ineffable mystery. God is known as the one who cannot be known. God "dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has every seen or can see" 1 Tm The ineffable mystery of God is testified in the prohibition against making images of him Ex Nonetheless, the marvels of creation manifest the unspeakable and ineffable grandeur of God Job 38, Wis 13, Rom 1: Before the mystery of God praise is the only proper response. How unsearchable are his judgements and how inscrutable his ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, who has been his counselor? While the mystery of God remains, humankind comes to know the mystery of God by faith through the light of the Holy Spirit In Clement of Alexandria stated that we may advance in our understanding of God, yet "knowing not what he is, but what he is not" Strom. Augustine echoes this In Ev. Dionysius is the first to use the term "apophatic [negating] theology" as opposed to "cataphatic [affirming] theology" Mystical Theology 3. All images and concepts of God are rejected and the soul enters into "the darkness with the Ineffable" ibid. Aquinas teaches that "we cannot know what God is, but rather what he is not" and therefore "we have no means for considering how God is, but rather how he is not" Summa theologiae I. Thus we predicate of God such attributes as being infinite not finite , immutable does not change , impassible does not possess emotional changes of state. Nonetheless, Aquinas, somewhat in contrast to the Eastern tradition, allowed that, founded upon human experience, we can truly affirm, by way of analogy, positive perfections to God such as being omniscient, good, wise, and loving. For Aquinas, even in heaven, when we see the very essence of God, we will not comprehend him Summa theologiae I, 12, 7. The more God reveals himself and so the more we come to know him the more ineffable he becomes and so the less we actually comprehend him. For example, God has revealed himself to be a trinity of persons. We know that God is the mystery of the Trinity , but we cannot comprehend the mystery of the Trinity. As Aquinas intimated above, in the beatific vision we will see clearly the mystery of the Trinity in all its glory, but in that vision we will simultaneously become aware of the complete ineffability of that mystery. Denzinger, Enchiridion symbolorum, ed. Freiburg ; cf. It is one thing to say that God is ineffable and it is another thing to say that we do not know the manner in which he is ineffable. The doctrines of the faith, such as that God is a trinity of persons or that Jesus is the Son of God existing as man, define what the ineffable mysteries of God and his actions are and so protect them from fully rational comprehension. The Complete Works, trans. Negativity in Christian Mysticism Cambridge

The formation process of Palestinian collective identities : the Ottoman and colonial periods Peasant wars of the twentieth century The 20th-Century Poster What is review of literature in research Development of American literary criticism In Praise of the Unfinished Politics of the welfare state Records of North American Big Game, 11th Edition Creating Safe Schools for All Children Geotechnical Risk in Rock Tunnels (Balkema-Proceedings and Monographs in Engineering, Water and Earth Sci Can It Be That the Cosmic Process Has No Relation to Moral Ends? Drugs and alcohol. 131 International opportunities for pharmacists in managed care Assessing Learning Questions To Ask Before Marrying (Red Dress Ink) Voodoo death Gregor Robinson Topological methods in Galois Representation Theory. Patil, B. Mahavira : prophet of non-violence. Self quiz answer key Gods Justice: Activity Book (Story Bible Activity Series: No.6) Sober Faith (Payton Skky) Litany of the Love of God 509 European social security law A Fire and a Face The Atlantic Generating station Writing about radio Michael C. Keith Treasure of the Keys (Heartsong Presents #229) Master devil don t kiss me novel in english What are advisory committees? V. 3. Inter-American literary relations Rappports litteraires inter-Americains The Wanderer (rack) Woolaroc Ranch in Bartlesville I know why the caged bird sings chapter 24 Swami Vivedananda Salvatore by natasha knight Cooking and canning with mamma DAMato Careers and continuing education The old testament story 9th edition The East Is Black Weber spirit e 310 manual