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The sacred fire: Wittgenstein, Pseudo-Denys, and transparency to the divine

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ABSTRACT

In order to explore what it means to pursue philosophical investigations for theological reasons, this paper argues that Ludwig Wittgenstein continues and corrects Pseudo-Denys' project in *The Divine Names*. I first argue that *The Divine Names* should be interpreted as attempting to render human thought transparent to the divine by relativizing our concepts. The success of this project is compromised because the concept of 'unity' is not relativized. I then develop the claim that Wittgenstein does relativize unity in a similar way and for similar religious reasons to Pseudo-Denys. As such, he can be read as continuing and correcting the Pseudo-Dionysian project. I conclude by reflecting on several of this argument's implications for the relationship between philosophy and Christian systematic theology.

What does it mean to pursue philosophical investigations for theological reasons? Or, to put it slightly differently – what does it mean for religious believers to think philosophically for the purpose of fulfilling the theological desires intertwined with their religious beliefs, as opposed to simply criticizing and regulating the validity of those beliefs? This paper explores one case study that can illuminate this question, reading Ludwig Wittgenstein as a philosopher driven by desires grounded in a kind of religious mysticism. More specifically, it argues that Wittgenstein can be read as continuing and correcting Pseudo-Denys' project in *The Divine Names* for reasons akin to those which drove Pseudo-Denys in the first place – not in the sense that Wittgenstein read and self-consciously sought to complete Pseudo-Denys' mystical project, which he did not, but in the sense that substantial parallels in their works invite such a reading. The first step is thus to lay out an interpretation of Pseudo-Denys' *The Divine Names*. Focussing on his middle-to-late period work, I will then show that Wittgenstein can be read as pursuing a similar project whilst denying one of Pseudo-Denys' most fundamental premises, and that he can be read as doing so in an attempt to fulfil a specific theological yearning.

The Place of Unity in Pseudo-Denys' Theological Project

To understand Pseudo-Denys' explication of the eponymous 'divine names,' we must first explore his cosmology. He states that 'the existence of everything as beings' derives

from 'the One, the Good, the Beautiful.'[1] Each of these terms name concepts predicated of the divine. Anything predicated of this divinity is then predicated of it in its entirety, for 'in Scripture all the names appropriate to God are praised regarding the whole ... divinity rather than any part of it.'[2] 'The Good' and 'the Beautiful' are as such predicated of one divinity – and not just any one, but the One. Because 'all being derives from, exists in, and is returned towards the Beautiful and the Good,'[3] moreover, 'all things must yearn for ... the Beautiful and the Good.'[4] Creaturely existence thus derives from and is structured by its desire for union with the One, since 'what is signified [by both "love" and "yearning"] is a capacity to effect a unity ... a particular commingling in the Beautiful and the Good.'[5]

Pseudo-Denys' intention is then to assist souls seeking union with God[6]. The character of this assistance, however, is nuanced by the fact that we cannot attain this union by our power, since the One is transcendent – we are 'surpassed by the infinity beyond being.'[7] Union with God must be effected by God. We cannot achieve it by our own power.

One key consequence of this inability – at least in terms of how Pseudo-Denys seeks to assist this union – is the need to recognize that when we speak of the One, we must not 'resort to words or conceptions concerning that hidden divinity that transcends being, apart from what the sacred Scriptures have divinely revealed.'[8] Otherwise, we might attempt to reach union with God using conceptions which, in fact, entrench our distance more deeply. We must instead use the terms of the Scriptural authors, not because these revealed terms are intrinsically superior, but because these authors wrote through '"the power granted by the Spirit" ... by which ... we reach a union superior'[9] to any we can effect. Since 'all human thinking is a sort of error when compared with ... divine thoughts,'[10] however, God's transcendence entails that we cannot apply even these Scriptural terms to God as to material things. For even with regard to these terms:

> we have a habit of seizing upon what is actually beyond us, clinging to the familiar categories of our sense perceptions, and then we measure the divine by our human standards and, of course, are led astray by the apparent meaning we give to divine and unspeakable reason.[11]

We must instead 'interpret the things of God in a way that befits God.'[12] This means reading Scriptural terms analogically, for 'with these analogies we are raised upward toward the truth of the mind's vision ... [leaving] behind us all our notions of the divine.'[13] Our use of divine names must therefore be cast in terms of analogical difference, lest we transpose categories of sense perception into the divine.

It is important to clarify what 'analogical' means here. At the risk of reading Pseudo-Denys through two interpreters, I read 'analogy' through Ralph McInerny's interpretation of Thomas Aquinas. Under this account, analogy is not a matter of using a term because two objects share a common feature. Instead, 'in things named analogously there is neither one account, as with univocals, nor totally diverse accounts, as with equivocals. Rather, a name said in many ways in this manner signifies diverse proportions to some one thing.'[14] Using a name analogically thus entails relativizing its meaning in light of its distinct object, without utterly dissolving its overall unity when applied to different – and differently inflecting – objects[15]. To use a name analogically in relation to God is to use it such that its meaning is determined by its transcendent object.

Pseudo-Denys deploys analogical renderings of creaturely concepts to show how apparent oppositions between these concepts break down in their application to God.

To give an example, he claims both that 'God is transcendentally, eternally ... and invariably the "same"'[16] and that '"difference" too is ascribed to God since he is providentially available to all things and becomes all things in all.'[17] Regarding sameness, he then writes that God 'precontains all opposites in one single, universal cause of sameness.' And regarding difference, he writes that 'the many visions of God differ in appearance ... [but this indicates] something other than what was outwardly manifested.'[18] Both these predicates' meanings are relativized in their analogical application to God, dissolving their contradiction without emptying them of significance.

The effect of this analogical deployment is then, for Pseudo-Denys, a kind of silence, as terms' categorical meanings are reconstituted in their application to God. When methodically applied to the divine names revealed in Scripture, this deployment forges a path to the thorough apophaticism of *The Mystical Theology*. We do not come to silence through the immediate absence of concepts, however: we must still use these names on the way. Rather, our concepts are rendered transparent as we move toward silence, facilitating our union with God[19]. On the basis that 'the union of divinized minds with the Light beyond all deity occurs in the cessation of all intelligent activity,'[20] and since we praise Light 'most appropriately through the denial of all beings,'[21] it then follows that so too 'with a wise silence do we ... honor the inexpressible.'[22]

I have argued that Pseudo-Denys' cosmology casts creatures as yearning for union with the One. This union must be effected by God, since divine transcendence renders its attainment beyond our capacity. And regarding the concepts through which we seek to know God, it follows that – acknowledging that union with God is God's prerogative – we must relativize our concepts in their application to God, rendering them transparent to the light that draws 'sacred minds upwards.'[23]

I am now going to argue that if this holds, then Pseudo-Denys' account compromises itself on its own terms because 'unity' is not relativized[24]. Pseudo-Denys does, of course, say that God's unity transcends 'the unity ... in beings,' claiming:

> [God] is not one part of a plurality nor yet a total of parts. Indeed his oneness is not of this kind at all ... Rather, he is one in a manner completely different from all this. He transcends the unity which is in beings. He is indivisible multiplicity, the unfilled overfullness which produces, perfects, and preserves all unity and multiplicity.[25]

This move is undermined, however, by a combination of 'unity's' content and its cosmological position in Pseudo-Denys' world-view. Regarding content, the meaning of 'unity' is grounded in creaturely life. This can be seen even in Plotinus' paradigmatic argument, implicit in Pseudo-Denys, that 'the One' is being's transcendent ground. Plotinus claims that a) 'it is in virtue of unity that beings are beings [whereas] deprived of unity, a thing ceases to be what it is called,'[26] and b) anything 'described as a unity is so in the precise degree in which it holds a characteristic being.'[27] Things are what they are because they are 'one.' Even if there is a 'form' of unity, however, what we take to be the unity or characteristic being of a thing is what we are taught to see it as being. We do not intuit the unity of a city or an army as participating in a transcendent One; we are taught what 'one' means by being taught to see these things as one[28]. Regarding cosmological position, meanwhile, Pseudo-Denys casts unity as playing *the* fundamental causal role in creation. As he writes, 'no duality can be an originating source; the source of every duality is a monad.'[29] It has

a privileged place in the celestial hierarchy, where 'unities hold a higher place than differentiations.'[30] And unity is also primary to being: 'multiplicity cannot exist without some participation in the One, [since] without the One there is no multiplicity, but there can still be the One where there is no multiplicity, just as one precedes all multiplied number.'[31] Multiplicity and unity are thus placed in a fundamental onto-logical hierarchy.

Neither of these claims is inherently problematic. The fact that unity's content has this worldly origin does not preclude applying it to God – after all, every term applied to God has this character. Nor does unity's position in the cosmological hierarchy necessarily threaten the consistency of Pseudo-Denys' larger account. He could ascribe this position to unity, after all, and still reflexively relativize the concept's worldly application through its asserted transcendence. In combination, however, this location of a worldly concept at the top of the celestial hierarchy has the opposite effect: the concept of unity is absolu-tized instead.

This can be seen in the case of the number line, to take one example. Pseudo-Denys notes that the precedence of unity is illuminated by the number 'one's' precedence over multiplied number. But he also says that 'transcendent unity defines the one itself and every number,'[32] such that the One absolutizes the very number-line used to illuminate it. Of material things, meanwhile, Pseudo-Denys writes that 'when things are said to be unified, this is in accordance with the preconceived form of the one proper to each.'[33] But we arrived at our concept unity by observing that a thing must be 'one' in order to be – and so by appeal to forms now 'preconceived' in the One. As such, unity is not applied analogically, nor is it treated as a concept to be *predicated* of divinity. Rather, it is treated as constituting divinity itself whilst retaining its worldly sense. Pseudo-Denys absolutizes a creaturely concept as the guarantor of being, placing it atop a hierarchy as subsuming any idea of an ontologically fundamental multiplicity, within which 'Unity itself [is the source] of everything unified.'[34]

It is important to qualify this argument in light of Pseudo-Denys' account of creation. He claims that creation follows from 'the beautiful, good superabundance of [God's] yearning,'[35] and denies that 'evil is inherent in matter qua matter.'[36] The fact something other than the One exists is not a negative thing – multiplicity is not a tragedy. He cannot, therefore, be described as denying diversity's value. All the same, diversity's goodness is conditional upon its relation to the prior good of unity. Multiplicity's goodness is not denied, but it is derivative.

Pseudo-Denys claims that the One's unity transcends the unity of creatures, then. But instead of relativizing our concept of unity, he reads it into the being of God. And in doing so, he reads an absolutized category of sense perception into divinity. On his own terms, 'the One' is thus a human concept used to measure the divine, closing off the union for which we yearn.

Wittgenstein's Religious Point of View

If this interpretation of *The Divine Names* is plausible, it can now be argued that Wittgenstein continues and corrects Pseudo-Denys' project. I am first going to argue that Wittgenstein's thought pursues a religious end and that this pursuit motivates an iconoclastic attack on Neo-Platonic unity. I will then argue for an account of how he

carries out this attack, claiming that his project substantially parallels Pseudo-Denys' in terms of both purpose and method.

Several texts have explored religious aspects of Wittgenstein's thought over the last few decades, especially in terms of epistemology and ethics. A number of comparative studies, for example, have looked at religious applications of Wittgenstein next to more conventionally religious writers. Genia Schönbaumsfeld has claimed that Wittgenstein and Kierkegaard's religious epistemologies inform an account of ethical thinking. She argues that both reject 'the craving for explanation and the idea that everything can be justified by appeal to the high court of reason.'[37] As a consequence, 'the call to have faith is an ethical imperative – it is an injunction to repent and transform the self . . . not a demand to change one's ontology.'[38] In a similar vein, the essays in *Grammar and Grace* compare aspects of Aquinas' thought to Wittgenstein, especially their shared Augustinian conception of moral enquiry[39]. There is much of value in both texts, but my focus is on the religious significance of an ontological aspect of Wittgenstein's thought – specifically, how he undermines a metaphysical view of unity using arguments which, though interwoven with epistemological and ethical considerations, cannot be reduced to epistemology or ethics.

Among studies analyzing the religious consequences and character of Wittgenstein's thought in its own right, Fergus Kerr's *Theology After Wittgenstein* is among the most noteworthy[40]. Again, however, its emphasis is different from my focus here. Kerr argues that Wittgenstein's later work is arrayed against 'the theological conception of the self which has dominated the Western tradition for centuries.'[41] Though this paper broaches issues foundational to this argument – after all, how one conceives one's self depends on how one conceives of 'one' – Kerr is not himself explicitly focused on theological conceptions of unity.

Philip Shields' *Logic and Sin in the Writings of Ludwig Wittgenstein* focuses more directly on the inherently religious character of Wittgenstein's thought, arguing that his 'philosophical writings are fundamentally religious as they stand.'[42] Shields bases his argument on 'an analogy between the standards of sense and the will of God,'[43] since the attempt to say what can only be shown leads to transgression and nonsense. Wittgenstein's thought is thus religious because grammar carries the authority of a divine judge[44]. There is much to commend in Shields' work. His account fails, however, because Wittgenstein himself undermines this analogy. For Wittgenstein, the fact that 'the only correlate in language to an intrinsic necessity is an arbitrary rule'[45] means that although we must be obedient to some grammatical standard by treating it as in some sense necessary *de facto*, no particular grammar can claim the absolute authority of *de jure* necessity[46].

How, then, should Wittgenstein be read as a religious thinker? I am going to narrow this question by focusing on his oft cited comment to Maurice O'Connor Drury, that 'I am not a religious man, but I can't help seeing every problem from a religious point of view.'[47] How, that is to say, should *this* claim be interpreted?

One starting point is Wittgenstein's Lecture on Ethics. In this lecture, he offers the following account of the characteristics of religious experience:

> I believe the best way of describing [this experience] is to say that when I have it I *wonder* at the existence of the world . . . Another experience straight away which I also know . . . [is] the

experience of *feeling absolutely safe*. I mean the state of mind in which one is inclined to say 'I am safe, nothing can injure me whatever happens.'[48]

Taking him at his word, we can thus claim that Wittgenstein understood religious experience as constituted by feelings of wonder and safety. This claim is then supported by the importance ascribed to both wonder and safety in Wittgenstein's wider corpus[49]. Regarding wonder, he writes in *Culture and Value* that 'man has to awaken to wonder . . . Science is a way of sending him to sleep again'[50] – given his belief that a narrow commitment to scientific method 'leads the philosopher into complete darkness,'[51] this points to wonder's value. Secondly, Drury records saying to Wittgenstein that when, 'Plato talks about the gods, it lacks that sense of awe which you feel throughout the Bible,' to which Wittgenstein replied 'I think you have just said something very important. Much more important than you realize.'[52] Wonder, understood as 'awe,' is here afforded deep significance. Finally, in 1947 Wittgenstein wrote that:

> The mathematician too can wonder at the miracles . . . of nature, of course, but can he do so once a problem has arisen about what it actually is he is contemplating? Is it really possible as long as the object that he finds astonishing and gazes at with awe is shrouded in philosophical fog?[53]

As we shall see, 'dispersing the fog' is a central goal of Wittgenstein's philosophical thought, and so there is good reason to interpret this remark as attributing great value to wonder[54].

Regarding 'safety,' meanwhile, Ray Monk records Wittgenstein trying to ease his anxiety by finding a sense of security. Wittgenstein told Bertrand Russell that William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience* might 'improve me in a . . . way . . . I would like to improve very much: namely I think that it helps me to get rid of the *Sorge* [worry, anxiety].'[55] Monk then links this escape from *Sorge* to the feeling of safety from the Lecture on Ethics – the feeling that 'no matter what happened in the world, nothing bad could happen to him.'[56] And safety is given an explicitly religious aspect in Wittgenstein's further comment that 'only religious feelings' provide the kind of safety that can ease fears expressed in *Sorge*[57].

Wittgenstein valued 'wonder' and 'safety,' and he saw them both as characteristic of religious experience. Taken together, this motivates the idea that for Wittgenstein, seeing problems from 'a religious point of view' means trying to work through problems in ways that fulfil a desire for these feelings. I am now going to argue that his philosophy can be shown to aim at precisely this. We have already read Wittgenstein's question, 'is [wonder] really possible as long as the object [found] astonishing . . . is shrouded in philosophical fog?'[58] This question can now be read as directly connected to his claim in *Philosophical Investigations* that 'the general concept of the meaning of a word surrounds the working of language with a haze . . . [making] clear vision impossible.'[59] Wittgenstein then casts the goal of philosophy as dissolving this haze in order to attain 'complete clarity'[60] – and this clarity facilitates both wonder and safety. Regarding wonder, for example, we can note the claim just rehearsed, that seeing something clearly apart from philosophical is a prerequisite for truly wondering at its existence. And regarding safety, clarity causes 'philosophical problems completely [to] disappear.'[61] After all, Wittgenstein writes, 'the real discovery is the one that enables me to break off philoso-phizing when I want to. – The one that gives philosophy peace, so that it is no longer

tormented by questions which bring itself into question.'[62] This goal of peace is then cast in terms of desire, on the basis that someone who philosophizes yearns for thoughts which are at peace[63]. If it is allowed that peace is concomitant with the safety that comes from being free of *Sorge*, then peace is bound up with safety, and so clarity facilitates the religious feeling of security[64]. The immediate goal of Wittgenstein's philosophy – 'clarity' – is thus that which facilitates religious feelings.

We have seen that philosophy aims at a clarity that facilitates both wonder and safety. It is now important to clarify what Wittgenstein means by 'clarity.' Shields reads it as signifying 'the complete clarity of logical form [and] the demanding rigor of the limits of language.'[65] For him, the clarity that Wittgenstein seeks is a rigorous delineation of language's internal limits. There are good reasons, however, to think that 'clarity' should be described in terms of a kind of transparency, not rigor *per se* – especially in cases where what must be clarified is the impossibility of rigorously expressing absolute limits. In *The Blue Book*, for example, Wittgenstein posits 'clear-cut and transparent'[66] sight as his method's goal. Clarity-as-transparency is then the operative concept in the question 'who is to say that Scripture really is unclear? Isn't it possible that it was essential . . . to tell a riddle?' – the answer to which is 'you are only supposed to see clearly what appears clearly even in this representation.'[67] This sense of 'clarity' is also operative when he reflects on the impossibility of exactly describing light reflecting off water, noting that clarity means recognizing 'there is no such thing as exactness in this language game.'[68] Finally, it is operative in the claim that 'no coloured picture . . . is able to represent the impression of "blurredness" correctly.'[69] Here, that is, clarity entails transparency to blurredness. Wittgenstein doesn't present clarity as rigor, then, but as a non-distorting transparency to what is seen – especially when what is seen defies 'rigorous' representation, such that it is itself 'unclear.'[70] The attempt to absolutely express rigorous limits, meanwhile, as covering all possible modes of representation, can only distort what it seeks to make clear.

The search for clarity-as-transparency can then be shown to motivate an iconoclastic aspect to Wittgenstein's thought. In *The Big Typescript*, he writes that 'all that philosophy can do is to destroy idols.'[71] Explicating this remark, Shields argues that Wittgenstein sees idolatry as the tendency to create 'objects of ultimate trust which are unable to support the weight of reliance placed in them.'[72] And given that Wittgenstein thinks that seeking to absolutely express rigorous limits cuts us off clarity, he can be read as treating those things which we think will enable us to absolutely express these limits as idols to be destroyed – a destruction that will facilitate the clarity that allows us to experience religious feelings of wonder and safety. At its best, then, philosophy destroys idols that occlude the clarity through which religious desires can be fulfilled.

Neo-Platonic Unity as an Idol

To summarize the argument so far, Wittgenstein can be read as a religious thinker because his philosophy aims at achieving a clarity which opens us to the religious goods of wonder and safety. This in turn motivates his desire to destroy idols. The next step is to show that this desire to destroy idols leads him to attack a Neo-Platonic concept of unity.

After outlining a method of investigation that makes 'the mental mist which … enshrouds our ordinary use of language disappear,' Wittgenstein says in *The Blue Book* that 'what makes it difficult for us to take this line of investigation is our craving for generality.'[73] This craving is rooted in a 'preoccupation with the method of science' – namely:

> the method of reducing the explanation of natural phenomena to the smallest possible number of primitive natural laws; and in mathematics, of unifying the treatment of different topics by using a generalisation … This tendency is the real source of metaphysics, and leads the philosopher into complete darkness.[74]

Now, Wittgenstein's claim that science prevents us awakening to wonder has already been noted. Craving for generality can thus immediately be seen as precluding wonder. Regarding peace, meanwhile, he writes elsewhere that 'perhaps science … having caused infinite misery in the process, will unite the world – I mean condense it into a single unit, though one in which peace is the last thing that will find a home'[75] (this is humorously contrary to Pseudo-Denys' claim that Perfect Peace binds 'all with the one homogenous yoke'[76]). The forces which motivate the darkening tendency of reductive generalization can thus be read as moving us toward idols which occlude both wonder and peace.

It is important to note that 'science' *per se* is not the problem here. The problem is that a particular scientific method 'elbows all others aside'[77] asserting itself as an absolute principle of reasoning. And it does so by tempting us with the idea that it can penetrate to the essences of things – essences 'given once and for all, and independent of any future experience,'[78] expressed in terms of the 'formal unity' which Wittgenstein himself once thought characteristic of propositions and language[79]. This temptation is, in turn, driven by our urge 'to understand the foundations, or essence, of everything empirical,'[80] which is motivated by a mistaken belief that this understanding will give us clarity. For Wittgenstein, however, the idea that 'what is peculiar, profound, and essential to us in our investigation resides in trying to grasp the incomparable essence of language'[81] is an illusion.

With this qualification, however, it is now possible to show that Wittgenstein's desire for clarity leads him to attack an identifiably Neo-Platonic concept of unity – for the essences and the scientistic method which preclude clarity *are both grounded in the presupposition of this Neo-Platonic concept*. This can first be seen by noting that our temptation to scientism is facilitated by 'the uniform appearance of words.'[82] This surface uniformity means that our language 'keeps seducing us into asking … questions'[83] like '"what is language;"'[84] questions that demand answers in the form of essences expressed by ideal concepts. We do, of course, employ ideal concepts for particular purposes, like an 'ideal of exactitude.'[85] But when language's surface uniformity is combined with our craving for generality, it leads us to treat ideals as things to 'to which everything has to conform'[86] if anything is to be what it is. We are thus 'dazzled by the ideal, and fail to see the actual application of the word.'[87] For in thinking that these applications must be uniform in their conformity to their respective ideals, we 'believe that there must after all in the last instance be uniformity … instead of holding … that it doesn't have to exist.'[88] To put this in the *The Blue Book's* terms – we think that because things *can* be 'one' in some sense, an ideal 'unity' must exist as the shadow of this possibility. It is then in conformity to this ideal that things in fact have their 'formal unity.' We thus make of

'unity' 'a shadowy being, one of the many we create when flummoxed by substantives to which no material objects correspond.'[89] And this shadow determines our fundamental attitude towards things in the world.

Wittgenstein's attack on this shadow of 'unity' can be illustrated using one of the most explicitly theological sections of the *Philosophical Investigations*. He writes that:

> A picture is conjured up which seems to fix the sense unambiguously: ... the form of expression seems to have been tailored for a god, who knows what we cannot know ... For us, however, these forms of expression are like vestments, which we may put on, but cannot do much with since we lack the ... power that would give them point and purpose.[90]

Ideals tempt us, in other words, because we think they can delimit language unambiguously, giving *one* form to which all particulars must conform if they are to count as some thing. We are tempted by an almost divine knowledge. For Wittgenstein, however, even if they could do this, we as creatures would not be able to use them to that effect. The ideal of unity suggested by language's surface uniformity is instead a distorting nimbus, a shadow cast by prejudice which clouds clarity, an idol to be destroyed.[91]

One could argue at this point that all I have shown is that Wittgenstein attacks *a* notion of unity – but 'unity' is a vague concept, and it doesn't follow from this that he is therefore attacking Neo-Platonic unity in particular. To show that Wittgenstein attacks unity in Pseudo-Denys' sense, then, it is worth going through those parts of the *Investigations* which can be read as touching directly on Neo-Platonic descriptions of 'the One,' even if Wittgenstein did not explicitly have this target in mind. First, Pseudo-Denys describes God as transcendentally simple, 'not one part of a plurality nor yet a total of parts.'[92] Wittgenstein complicates efforts to ground unity in simplicity, however. He notes that we use the word '"composite" (and therefore the word "simple") in an enormous number of different ... ways,'[93] then concludes that designating something as simple grounds no deeper unity than we find in our diverse uses of 'simple' or 'complex.'[94] An ascription of simplicity is no more simple than the plurality of ways that the term 'simple' can be deployed. And so simplicity itself does not necessarily entail any absolute sense of 'unity.'

Secondly, as above, Pseudo-Denys says 'God is transcendentally ... unalterably and invariably the "same."'[95] But Wittgenstein attacks the idea that 'sameness' can connote fundamental unity. After all, 'the use of the word "rule" and the use of the word "same" are interwoven'[96] – and since rules underdetermine their diverse applications, the use of 'same' is likewise diverse and underdetermined[97]. Again, the term grounds no unity deeper than is found in its usage.

Finally, Plotinus describes the One as 'the unity which is itself.'[98] But Wittgenstein argues that 'is' is used in different ways without the 'is' of identity and the 'is' of predication disintegrating into different terms. That is to say, 'the unity which *is* itself' can nonetheless be many things – as many things as the term 'is' allows, that is, given that its rules too cannot be univocally determined once and for all. These uses thus constitute a multiplicity in identity itself; a diversification-without-disintegration that undermines efforts to delimit unity by using 'is' to ground it in self-identity[99]. There is good reason, then, to see Wittgenstein as undermining Neo-Platonic unity, for by undermining unitary ideals, he undermines ideals of unity[100].

I have argued *that* Wittgenstein attacks Neo-Platonic unity as an idol. We can now focus on *how* he does this. This has been foreshadowed by the claims reviewed just above, where Wittgenstein shows how the multiplicity of ways in which words connoting unitary simplicity are used undermines ascriptions of fundamental unity. Articulating his critical method thoroughly, however, will require taking a step back from these particular arguments so as to survey his broader philosophical strategies.

Wittgenstein's philosophy can be described as attempting to develop a perspicuous view of our diverse uses of language, so as to ease the hold that the surface appearances of language have on us. This view helps to remove biases that force us to think that 'facts must conform to . . . pictures embedded in our language.'[101] This, in turn, clears away mistakes rooted in 'analogies between the forms of expression in different regions of our language,'[102] helping us to see 'that things which look the same are really different.'[103] Wittgenstein thus tries to guard 'our assertions against distortion' by giving a 'clear view . . . of what the ideal is, namely an object of comparison [rather than] a prejudice . . . to which everything has to conform.'[104] That is to say, he surveys the diverse use of different terms so as to relativize our ideal concepts in light of their actual usage.

The most pertinent example of this is then language itself. Wittgenstein asserts that his method shows that 'what we call "proposition," "language," has not the formal unity that I imagined, but is a family of structures more or less akin to one another.'[105] Indeed, the *Investigations* can be described as an attempt to show – not say – that the phenomena we call language 'have no one thing in common in virtue of which we use the same word for all.'[106] Its excursions and tangents are all geared toward showing how language is irreducibly diverse, as are its rules and instruments. Crucially, however, the irreducible diversity of language means that *being* is diverse as well. When investigating 'imagination,' for example, Wittgenstein states that focusing on the word's diverse uses does not mean he wants 'to talk only about words. For the question of what imagination essentially is, is as much about the word "imagination" as my question.'[107] Rather 'essence is expressed by grammar.'[108] And because grammars are irreducibly diverse and open to diverse applications[109], essences are likewise constituted by an internal multiplicity[110]. This, then, grounds an explicit attack on the idea that reality is ultimately constituted by any unity more fundamental than the multiplicities which inflect our articulations of that unity. A perspicuous view, that is, shows that 'being' cannot be one in any more fundamental sense than it is multiple, given our multiple grammars of 'oneness.' And since this uniformity should be understood in terms of Neo-Platonic unity, Wittgenstein can thus likewise be read as attacking Psedo-Denys' concept of 'Oneness,' both with regard to its content and insofar as it can be the apex of an ontological hierarchy.

It is important to note that Wittgenstein does not exorcise ideals or unity, which would make an idol out of the 'absence of idols.'[111] Both play roles in language-games. Nor does he, as Shields puts it, invert 'Neo-Platonic ontology [by] taking "the many" as the ground of meaning that expresses the will of God and taking the One as an idol.'[112] For even though 'the One' *is* an idol, inverting this structure would make multiplicity an idol instead. Instead, Wittgenstein dissolves the prejudices that sort unity and multiplicity into an ontological hierarchy, such that neither has superior status – an attempt which can be described as dismantling 'the edifice of our pride,'[113] rather than redecorating the same edifice with different idols.

With this noted, however, Wittgenstein's thought can nonetheless be seen as directed against Neo-Platonic unity for religious reasons. He attacks this unity as an idol which cuts off clarity by shrouding thought in philosophical fog, and he seeks this clarity because it is a precondition of the religious goods for which we yearn. He attempts to arrive at clarity by demonstrating the intrinsic multiplicity of any given concept, undermining any claim to absolute expression by relativizing concepts to their specific application. He can thus be read as continuing and correcting Pseudo-Denys' project, even apart from any direct engagement with Pseudo-Denys' work. Regarding continuation, he relativizes concepts so as to dissolve idols which occlude religious goods. And regarding correction, he treats Pseudo-Denys' concept of 'unity' as an idol and relativizes it too, meaning he can pursue this shared project more thoroughly[114].

The Role of God in Wittgenstein and Pseudo-Denys' Thought

I have argued that Wittgenstein attacks a Neo-Platonic concept of unity for Pseudo-Dionysian reasons. But there are still questions that need to be broached. Especially given the lack of any immediate connection between the two, this identification has not been shown to be more than accidental – the fact that Wittgenstein saw his thought as religious does not entail its being religious in a sense Pseudo-Denys would recognize. Neither has Wittgenstein's self-description as 'not a religious man' been accounted for. It must still be shown that his 'religious point of view' non-accidentally connects him to Pseudo-Denys, and that it does so in a way that allows the validity of his non-religious self-designation[115].

Earl Fronda has attempted to link Wittgenstein to Pseudo-Denys. He argues that Wittgenstein claims that 'metaphysical statements [including statements about God] are nonsense because they transgress limits of language,'[116] on the basis that language is conditioned by a finitude that renders speech about God impossible. God is 'semantically transcendent,' such that 'to Wittgenstein, one cannot speak literally of the transcendent god.'[117] This is then identified with Pseudo-Denys' mysticism. I am not convinced by this argument, since apophaticism alone does not necessarily render thought either 'religious' or Pseudo-Dionysian. Apart from a specified account of God, the fact that 'about the transcendent, the mature Wittgenstein … opts for silence'[118] can just as easily lead to materialist positivism as religious mysticism. If Wittgenstein's thought is to be identified with Pseudo-Denys', it must be shown that his view of God is similar enough to Pseudo-Denys' for such an identification to be plausible.

Helpfully, Wittgenstein provides resources for discerning his operative conception of divinity. He writes in the preface to the *Investigations* that it might fall to his book 'in the darkness of this time … to bring light into one brain or another.'[119] The possibility of this light, however, lies outside himself – for as he writes in *Culture and Value*, 'the light work sheds is a beautiful light, which, however, only shines with real beauty if it is illuminated by yet another light.'[120] He also asks, 'is what I am doing really worth the effort? Yes, but only if a light shines on it from above.'[121] Finally, Wittgenstein states that 'it may be that what gives my thoughts their luster on these occasions is a light shining on them from behind. That they do not themselves glow.'[122] The value of his thought, then, comes from the light above. (This image might well not be incidental either. It is in Augustine's *Confessions*[123], which Wittgenstein described as 'the most serious book ever written.'[124]

Drury also notes that 'Wittgenstein chose his metaphors with great care,'[125] which is pertinent here since religious similes 'move on the edge of an abyss.'[126])

Given that 'light' is religiously significant to Wittgenstein, a letter to G.E. Moore in 1941 then helps flesh out the character of this significance. Writing on the event of Moore's promotion, Wittgenstein expresses the fear that Moore is walking on the 'edge of a cliff at the bottom of which I see lots of philosophers and scientists lying dead.'[127] To ward off this danger, he asks Moore to read a poem called *The Sacred Fire*, saying 'I hope it will tell you exactly what I want to say.'[128] The poem then describes two fires. The first is Vesta's eternal fire, tended by the Vestal Virgins. The second is a fire 'within my breast.' This second fire 'leaps up warm at every tide and turn, a standing offering at the Muses' shrine. By their breath kindled, for them does it burn.'[129] Though the poem is open to many interpretations, it can – even on the basis of these sparse lines – be read as implying a) that the second fire responds to the movement of the first and/or b) that the second fire is kindled by and for divine guardians. Both interpretations ground an emphasis on the necessity of openness to divine significance for philosophical well-being. For it is through openness to the fire of the divine, even if maintained in worship by creatures, that the fire in creaturely hearts is kept alive and burning – a source of passion which can ward off the spiritually stultifying aridity of professional philosophy at Cambridge.

Wittgenstein can thus be seen here impressing on Moore the belief that we come to the truth of passion by moving in accordance with the movement of an eternal light and/or recognising our dependence on forces beyond us. And so we can read his account of clarity outlined above under a double-aspect. It is certainly transparency to how things are, opening us to wonder and peace. But it is also transparency to divine significance – transparency to a light above, lest we think our light shines by its own power; transparency to a power beyond, lest we starve our fires of their source and goal. Read against his early claim that 'we are in a certain sense dependent, and what we are dependent on we can call God,'[130] this suggests that Wittgenstein held the following view of divinity: God is that on which he depends to illuminate his thought, and so to open him to wonder and safety[131]. As Shields says, then at the core of Wittgenstein's thought is the idea that 'we are ultimately dependent, as it were, on the ... grace of God.'[132] And the goal of his philosophy is to render us open to those on which we depend.

This reading has the benefit of making sense in the context of Wittgenstein's wider statements. It makes sense of his saying to Drury that 'a religious person regards placidity or peace as a gift from heaven, not as something one ought to hunt after'[133] – a recognition which, by noting that we must receive what we yearn for, limits what philosophy can do. It makes sense of his wanting his work to be seen (like Bach's) as being 'to the glory of the God most high, and that my neighbor may be benefitted thereby.'[134] And it makes sense of why he 'thanked God for a gift he did not deserve'[135] when able to work after feeling mentally cramped.

Finally, this reading also allows us to hypothesize as to why Wittgenstein said that he was not a religious man. In *Culture and Value*, he states that 'a religious belief could only be something like a passionate commitment to a system of reference.'[136] But though he saw Christianity's symbolism as 'wonderful beyond words,'[137] he could not commit himself to it, not because of contempt for religion, but his own feeling of inadequacy. He wrote that only if he submerged himself in religion could 'doubts [about myself] be stilled. Because only religion would have the power to destroy vanity.'[138] He stated 'I said

I can stop doing philosophy when I like. That is a lie! I can't.[139] This entails that he could not find peace. Wittgenstein's non-religiousness can thus be read as a function of his felt incapacity for religious goods – his lack of transparency and clarity – rather than a dismissal of religious faith[140]. That is to say, his self-ascribed irreligiousness can be understood as the expression of a longing, not a disavowal of religious desire.

I have given a minimal account of Wittgenstein's conception of God. Even on this account, however, his description of divinity in terms of the light and fire which give a knowledge that grants us peace bears a strong family resemblance to Pseudo-Denys' descriptions of divine activity. To take two examples, Pseudo-Denys claims both that God grants 'enlightenments proportionate to each being, and . . . draws sacred minds upwards to permitted contemplation,'[141] and that 'we shall have a conceptual gift of light from him.'[142] If this resemblance holds, then Pseudo-Denys and Wittgenstein share minimally but non-accidentally similar conceptions of divinity: God is the one upon which we depend for the revelation of truth. There are, of course, differences in their senses of the divine – after all, this paper has argued that Wittgenstein undermines Pseudo-Denys' understanding of divine unity. But their accounts of our yearning for, dependence on, and transparency to the divine are sufficiently similar for them to be identified together in their religious aims.

To conclude: both Pseudo-Denys and Wittgenstein seek to render us transparent to the divine by relativising human concepts. This prevents us from reading our concepts into the divine nature, which would cut us off from union with the divine. Pseudo-Denys does not relativize 'unity,' however, and so undermines his own project. Wittgenstein does relativize unity for religious motivations similar to Pseudo-Denys'. As such, Wittgenstein continues and corrects the Pseudo-Denys' project in *The Divine Names*.

Coda

If this argument holds, what does it suggest for the question of what it means to think philosophically for theological reasons? I am going to briefly outline three of its implications. First, it means that the concepts with which one philosophizes are as answerable to one's religious desires as one's desires are answerable to those concepts. Throughout his corpus, Wittgenstein seeks concepts that will not foreclose the fulfillment of a religious desire for peace and security. The desire itself, whilst not immune to philosophical scrutiny – indeed, it must be scrutinized if it is not to become self-defeating – determines what success in philosophy looks like, namely, the capacity to stop philosophizing.

If this is true, however, a second implication is this: insofar as religious desires are themselves always conceptually inflected, philosophy can serve as a resource for ensuring that the concepts that play a fundamental role in directing desire are not themselves caught up in illusion. This same desire for divine goods is, after all, the main source of error for Wittgenstein. We are 'tempted' and 'seduced' by the promises of philosophy to provide a comfort which creaturely tools cannot provide. Rather than suppressing desire, however, Wittgenstein uses philosophy to direct it towards the right 'object,' by undermining the claim of any perceptible or intelligible phenomenon to be an adequate object in place of God. Philosophy can, then, play a critical role in theological thought – not by

regulating religious desire, but by informing how one conceives the possible objects of that desire.

Finally, these two things together frame a way in which theology and philosophy can interact to shape how both theological and philosophical concepts are formed in light of what one believes about the divinity one seeks. If it is allowed that *how* one desires is shaped by *what* one desires, and that *what* one desires is shaped by *how* one conceptualizes that 'what,' then the fact that God Godself is conceptualized a certain way should impact how one conceptualizes the other 'whats' of one's desires, and so the shape of one's desires as they reach out for God and world. That is to say, one's beliefs about God should play a role in determining how one conceptualizes that which is not God. This might be a truism for any theocentric account of creaturely existence. But what Wittgenstein helps us see is how this might function regarding the most fundamental aspects of our conceptual apparatuses. The question can be thus raised: what do doctrinal claims about God imply, not just for the concepts we have, but for how we *form* our concepts of both divine and creaturely being – and so for how we inflect the desires that drive us toward both God and that which is not God? What is at stake here is not necessarily 'transparency,' so much as a kind of translucence, or refraction. Nonetheless, my belief is that pursuing this question will illuminate the ripples across which glints of grace do shimmer.

Acknowledgments

Disclosure statement

Notes

1. Pseudo–Denys and Luibhéid, *Complete Works*, 77-78.
2. Ibid, 58.
3. Ibid., 79.
4. Ibid., 79.
5. Ibid., 81.
6. Ibid, 130.
7. Ibid., 49.
8. Ibid., 49.
9. Ibid., 49.
10. Ibid., 105.
11. Ibid., 106.
12. Ibid., 107.
13. Ibid, 53.

14. Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a 15.5.c; and cit. McInerny, *Aquinas and Analogy*, 96.
15. It is worth noting here that, as stated by Kathryn Tanner in *Theories of Culture* relativise can have two senses: 'the sense of containing such material within its proper bounds under God, and the sense of setting it in a proper relation to God.' (pp.145-146). I believe that the argument made here works whichever sense of 'relativize' is employed, but the potential ambiguity is important to note.
16. Pseudo–Denys and Luibhéid, *Complete Works*, 116.
17. Ibid., 116.
18. Ibid., 116.
19. It is worth noting that this transparency does not *entail* union with God. Rather, it is is a preliminary openness to revelation, within which the Good clears 'away the fog of ignorance … [unwrapping] those covered over by the burden of darkness.' (Pseudo-Denys, *Complete Works*, 75) It is also worth noting that this conceptual transparency is a necessary step on the way to silence. As such, it has a reality of its own, and critiques can be levelled against it in such a way as to threaten the integrity of the path as a whole. In the case of this paper, the argument is that a failure to render the concept of unity transparent in this way means that certain features of this concept illicitly structure the nature of the being before which we are supposed to be silent.
20. Pseudo–Denys and Luibhéid, *Complete Works*, 54.
21. Ibid., 54.
22. Ibid., 50.
23. See note above 22.
24. C.f. Kathryn Tanner's *God and Creation*, 42-45 for an argument along similar lines, focused specifically on certain contradictions between contrastive and non-contrastive accounts of 'the One' in Plotinus' thought.
25. Pseudo–Denys and Luibhéid, *Complete Works*, 67.
26. Plotinus, *The Enneads*, 9th Tractate, Chapter 1.
27. Ibid., 1.
28. C.f. Pseudo-Denys, *Complete Works*, p.53: 'One can neither discuss nor understand the One … nor can one speak about and have knowledge of the fitting way in which the holy angels can commune with the comings or with the effects of the transcendentally over-whelming goodness.' This entails that there is no means of knowing unity directly apart from the modes of teaching by which we learn other concepts.
29. Pseudo–Denys and Luibhéid, *Complete Works*, 88.
30. Ibid., 67.
31. Ibid., 128.
32. Ibid., 129.
33. Ibid., 128.
34. Ibid., 99.
35. Ibid., 82.
36. Pseudo–Denys, *Complete Works*, 92.
37. Schönbaumsfield, *Confusion of the Spheres*, 149.
38. Ibid., 173
39. C.f. Stout and McSwain, *Grammar and Grace*, 3.
40. C.f. Also: Malcolm, *Wittgenstein: A Religious Point of View?*
41. Kerr, *Theology After Wittgenstein*, 47.
42. Shields, *Logic and Sin*, 2.
43. Ibid., 50.
44. c.f. Ibid., 47.
45. Shields, *Logic and Sin*, 46.
46. C.f. Also Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, §617.
47. Drury, *The Danger of Words*, xiv The fact religion occupied Wittgenstein's thought is supported by notes in *Culture and Value* and his conversations with Drury, where he

discusses theologians such as Calvin (*The Danger of Words*, 166-7), Hooker (135), Barth (119 and 146), Origen (161) and Lessing (134 and 166).

48. Wittgenstein, 'Lecture on Ethics,' *Philosophical Occasions*, 41. My emphasis. The context of these remarks may make interpretation appear difficult – after all, the lecture casts attempts to express these experiences as a hopeless running up against linguistic boundaries (c.f. p.44) This does not, however, count against Wittgenstein seeing experiences of wonder and safety as central to a religious feeling essential to human existence – it merely entails that he believed it impossible properly to express them.
49. Indeed, Jennifer Herdt claims that 'one of the most sustained . . . themes in Wittgenstein's thought . . . was that of wonder at the existence of the world.' (*Grammar and Grace*, 247).
50. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 5.
51. Wittgenstein, *Blue and Brown Books*, 18.
52. Drury, *The Danger of Words*, 161.
53. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 57.
54. Ibid, 56. C.f. also *Philosophical Investigation*s, §524.
55. Monk, *The Duty of Genius*, 51. This is borne out by Drury, who reports Wittgenstein reporting that James 'helped me a lot at one time.' (*The Danger of Words*, 106).
56. Monk, *The Duty of Genius*, 51.
57. Drury, *The Danger of Words*, 100.
58. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 57.
59. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §5.
60. Ibid.§133.
61. Ibid.
62. Ibid.
63. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 43.
64. I am going to use peace and safety interchangeably for the duration of this paper.
65. Shields, *Logic and Sin*, 40.
66. Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books*, 17.
67. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 31.
68. Wittgenstein, *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, §1080.
69. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Remarks*, 260.
70. C.f. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §79: 'Say what you please, so long as it does not prevent you from seeing how things are. (And when you see that, there will be some things that you won't say.)'
71. Wittgenstein, *Big Typescript, TS. 213*, 305.
72. Shields, *Logic and Sin*, 86.
73. See note above 66., 17.
74. Ibid., 18.
75. Monk, *The Duty of Genius*, 485.
76. Pseudo–Denys and Luibhéid, *Complete Works*, 122-3.
77. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, p.60
78. See above 59.§92
79. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §108 It could be argued that reading 'the essence of things' in §92 in terms of this 'formal unity' is exegetically suspect. But on the basis that Wittgenstein holds himself at an earlier point to have been seeking just such an essence, even if in terms of 'logical form,' it is reasonable to me to suppose that when he writes 'what we call language . . . has not the formal unity that I imagined,' he understands this formal unity to be fundamentally tied to the notion of an essence which can be given 'once and for all.'
80. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*.89.
81. Ibid. §97.
82. Ibid. §11.
83. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 15.
84. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*. §92.
85. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 37.

86. Ibid, 26.
87. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §100.
88. See note above 68. §907.
89. See noteabove 66., 36.
90. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §426. C.f. Also §346 and §352.
91. C.f. *Philosophical Investigations*, §97 One could argue against this that since Wittgenstein focuses on unity as it emerges from discursive practices, whereas Pseudo-Denys appeals to a unity that is One in itself, the unity he targets does not resemble Pseudo-Denys' Neo-Platonic unity. Even if the One is a transcendent reality, however, we have seen that Neo-Platonic unity is grounded in discursive practices of naming. It is this emphasis on a thing being what it is called that guides Pseudo-Denys' articulation of unity – such that even if a transcendent unity is allowed, the concept used to articulate this unity is grounded in the discursive practices dealt with by Wittgenstein.
92. Pseudo–Denys and Luibhéid, *Complete Works.*, 67.
93. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §47.
94. Ibid.
95. Pseudo–Denys and Luibhéid, *Complete Works.*, 116.
96. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §225.
97. C.f. Braver, *Groundless Grounds*, 121: 'As the later Wittgenstein never tires of demonstrating, pictures underdetermine how we use them . . . [but] automatically following rules in standard ways makes it feel as though the application were contained within the rule.'
98. Plotinus, *The Enneads*, Tractate 9, Chapter 2.
99. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §561, 562. C.f. Also §216: 'A thing is identical with itself.' – There is no finer example of a useless sentence, which nevertheless is connected with a certain play of the imagination.
100. It could be argued that Pseudo–Denys can make appeal to the Scriptural claim that God is one here (c.f. Deuteronomy 6:4, NIV translation). It is important to note that what is at stake is not the claim that God is One (as well as simple and eternally the same). The argument focuses on whether these claims index the character of God's being to a particular account of what it is to be 'one.'
101. Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books*, 43.
102. See above 59. §90.
103. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 157.
104. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 26.
105. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 108.
106. Ibid. §35.
107. Ibid. §370.
108. Ibid.
109. C.f. Forster, *The Arbitrariness of Grammar*, 21-30 which elucidates Wittgenstein's commitment to a 'diversity thesis' regarding the irreducible diversity of grammars.
110. This argument asserts a close intertwining of language, psychological phenomena, and metaphysics in Wittgenstein's thought. This is a contentious issue which I cannot do full justice to here. In light of §370, however – especially its generalization in the remark 'theology as grammar' – such an intertwining is at least tenable. If grammar tells us what a thing is, it seems to follow that any 'being' is bound up in the conditions of its own significance. This does not render Wittgenstein an idealist, since at least some of these conditions are necessarily external to human thought. But it does entail what any 'being' is cannot be articulated apart from the grammar which renders that thought significant. Since Wittgenstein's analyses of psychological phenomena substantiate his denial that grammar can either be grounded in or produce formal unity, and since it is grammar which both renders any 'being' significant and expresses what it is, it follows that beings cannot be characterized by a fundamental unity. In this way, then, language, psychology, and metaphysics are bound together in Wittgenstein's thought.
111. Wittgenstein, *The Big Typescript*, 305.

112. Shields, *Logic and Sin*, 77.
113. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 26.
114. There is an important difference between the two thinkers, in that Pseudo-Denys relativizes concepts in their application to God, while Wittgenstein does so through an analysis of language per se. Pseudo-Denys' demonstration of concepts' relativity in the highest spheres should undermine their claim to absoluteness in the lowest, however. We can thus identify Pseudo-Denys' relativizing above and Wittgenstein's relativizing below as part of the same theological project.
115. I am not going to argue for a definition of what it means to be 'religious' here. Rather, I am going to argue that Wittgenstein and Pseudo–Denys are similar enough to ground the claim that if the latter's thought is religious, then the former's is as well.
116. Fronda, *Wittgenstein's (Misunderstood) Religious Thought*, 20-21.
117. Fronda, *Wittgenstein's (Misunderstood) Religious Thought*, 204.
118. Fronda, *Wittgenstein's (Misunderstood) Religious Thought*, 69.
119. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §4.
120. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 26.
121. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 57.
122. Ibid., 66.
123. C.f. Augustine, *Confessions*, especially Book VII:10.
124. Drury, *The Danger of Words*, 90.
125. Drury, *The Danger of Words*, ix.
126. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 29.
127. Wittgenstein and McGuinnes, *Wittgenstein in Cambridge*, 341.
128. Ibid.
129. *Das heilige Feuer*, Conrad Meyer, English Translation in Wittgenstein and McGuinness, *Wittgenstein in Cambridge*, 342
130. Wittgenstein, *Notebooks*, 74.
131. It is perhaps worth noting a statement of Wittgenstein's that I am not employing here: 'What is good is also divine. Queer as it sounds, that sums up my ethics.' (*Duty of Genius*, p.278) I am passing over it because, though an important statement, it doesn't convey any information without either a clear sense of Wittgenstein's view of what is 'good' or what is 'divine.' On the basis of the claims made in this paper, moreover, it is plausible to me that we can learn more of Wittgenstein's view of what is good from his view of the divine than vice versa.
132. Shields, *Logic and Sin*, 86.
133. Drury, *The Danger of Words*, 96.
134. Drury, *The Danger of Words*, 168, from a draft preface for *Philosophical Remarks*.
135. Monk, *The Duty of Genius*, 383.
136. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 64.
137. Drury, *The Danger of Words*, 86.
138. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 48.
139. Drury, *The Danger of Words*, 219.
140. C.f. Monk, *The Duty of Genius*, 383 I believe that Wittgenstein's self-exclusion from the religious sphere points to an inconsistency in his thought – namely that peace and wonder rely on recognizing what is beyond one's capacity, but that one must shape oneself into being able to recognize this. Given his comment to Drury, however – that a religious person views placidity as a gift – it may also be that it is precisely for this reason that he excluded himself; that his sense of irreligiousness stemmed from his inability to live into the idea that he could only find peace by receiving it.
141. Pseudo–Denys and Luibhéid, *Complete Works*., 50.
142. Ibid., 52.

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