The energized colloquial language, free from the conventions of religious rhetoric, suggests both the author's individual voice and an independence of mind which in the long history of commentary on *The Cloud* has been celebrated by some, denied or deplored by others. This passage is distinctive in the author's writings in its open resort to Dionysius' authority, then accepted as apostolic, and in its implied alignment with divine authority in its closing adaptation of Christ's often repeated words. Elsewhere the author is true to his expressed dislike of academic display, in that he does not draw attention to his indebtedness in chapters 63–6 and 71–3 to Richard of Saint-Victor’s *Benjamin minor* and *Benjamin major*, to Carthusian sources, or to borrowings from *The Scale of Perfection* by his contemporary Walter Hilton. In its defensive invocation of authority and direction to a limited readership, the passage is one of many internal revelations of the discursive fragility of *The Cloud* in ecclesiastical tradition and contemporary context.
Such fragility is further suggested by the text's development, which is characterized by repetitions and fluctuations in rhetoric that sometimes indicate interruptions to composition. The author's offer to amend or amplify on request (130.14–17) confirms that he did not seek to polish his longest treatise to the structural perfection achieved in his formal epistles, Discretion of Stirrings and An Epistle of Prayer, which are the literary equivalents of costly manuscript art. Instead the oral dialogues with his apprentice that seem to have inspired The Cloud and which permeate it as a textual strategy extend to an intertextual dialogue with Hilton. Thus although the text solidified to the form familiar to later generations at the point when manuscript transmission commenced, its details probably remained conditional in its author's conception. In the same empirical spirit he translated the Pseudo-Dionysius' Mystical Theology under the title of Deonise Hid Diunitie.

The Latin sources from which the author fashioned his translation were selectively published, together with the Middle English text, in 1924 by Abbot Justin McCann and again in 1935 by Professor Phyllis Hodgson. McCann demonstrated that chapters 1–3 of Deonise Hid Diunitie, comprising approximately three-quarters of the text, are based on John Sarracenus' (John Sarrazin's) Nova translato (c.1167), while chapters 4–5 follow Thomas Gallus' Extractio or Paraphrase (1238). Some conflation of these sources occurred, with the further complications that the Extractio is based on Sarracenus and that it mixes translation with exposition. The editors traced further borrowings to Gallus' Explanatio (c.1241), a commentary on Sarracenus' version of the Pseudo-Dionysius' canon, including the Mystical Theology.

The source texts chosen by the Cloud-author represented major stages in the process by which the philosophy of the Pseudo-Dionysius came to influence the spiritual beliefs and practices of the western Church. Sarracenus' free rendition found equivalent Latin terms for Greek vocabulary that John Scotus Eriugena had retained in what became known as the Vetus translation, the first acceptable Latin translation of the canon, completed by 875. As a monk at Saint-Denis, Sarracenus helped to build a tradition of Parisian Pseudo-Dionysian scholarship in which Gallus, a canon regular at the abbey of Saint-Victor, was to occupy a 'prominent and distinct position'. Gallus' immersion in Pseudo-Dionysian thought over twenty years produced interpretations that blended scholarship with pastoral and contemplative concerns. His commentaries were widely read, and from the fourteenth century their manuscripts circulated in Carthusian circles both on the Continent and in England. They were therefore a natural source for the Cloud-author when he came to compose the only known Middle English version of the Mystical Theology.

Although Hodgson claims that Deonise Hid Diunitie 'follows its Latin sources closely, with only very minor additions, omissions and modifications', she lists these at length. She also notes the presence of 'more vivid imagery ... often reminiscent of the lively language of The Cloud.' By contrast, in 1983 Rosemary Ann Lees referred to the translation's 'comparative emancipation ... apparent both in the flexibility with which it supplements and culls matter
from its various sources as well as in the facility with which it seems in general to preserve the native idiom of English prose.'15 She claims more contentiously that 'intelligibility seems in all things to have governed [the author's] practice as a translator'.16 My argument is that the small changes introduced by the author follow discernible trends, outlined below, and that even in this short text they accumulate sufficient mass substantially to remake the sources. I contend further that the author's procedures in _Dunstan Hid Deuniite_ were chosen so as actively to confirm his development of negative theology in _The Cloud_.

The prologue to _Dunstan Hid Deuniite_ maintains the mixed pastoral and defensive stance of the _Cloud_ passage quoted above:

> Pis writyng pat next folowep is pe Ingilsche of a book pat Seynte Denys wrote vnto Thimothe, pe whiche is clepid in Latyn tongue _Mistica Theologia_. Of pe whiche book, for pis pat it is mad minde in pe 70 chapter of a book wretin before (pe whiche is clepid _De Cloude of Veskownging_ how pat Denis sentence wol cleedli afforme al pat is wretyn in pat same book: perfore, in translacion of it, I haue not onliche folowed pe nakid lettre of pe text, but for to declare pe hardnes of it, I haue moche folowed pe sentence of pe Abbot of Seinte Victore, a noble & a woefi expositour of pis same book. (3.3–12)

Two slippages suggest authorial anxiety. The first is that 'Denis bookes' in _The Cloud_ has become 'Denis sentence', a change that glosses over the adoption of the _Mystical Theology_ as being fully representative of Dionysius' thought.17 The connective 'perfore' camouflages a second slippage, since the declaration that the author resorted to Gallus to clarify a difficult text does not follow logically from the contention that the _Mystical Theology_ will clearly affirm every word of _The Cloud_. The author's uncharacteristic praise of Gallus may aim to defend his choice of the _Extraction_ over Robert Grosseteste's commentary, which was based on the Greek original. However the _Cloud_ author's assertion is more obviously aimed at defending his decision to combine his sources.

As translator he in fact displays the same colloquial vigour and independence that he demonstrates in the invented passages so far discussed. McCann, Alastair Minnis, and John Clark have considered how closely the theology of _The Cloud_ is aligned with Gallus' affective teachings.18 However, _Dunstan Hid Deuniite_ is infused not only with Gallus' 'sentence', but also with the doctrine and stylistic features of _The Cloud_. The translation extends the sequence by which Saracenus19 and Gallus in turn20 adapted Dionysius' Greek Neoplatonism to Latin Christian doctrine. Beyond this, the uniqueness of negative theology in the vernacular devotional context of England in the 1390s further explains why the author shaped his version of the _Mystical Theology_ so as to support _The Cloud_.

Many of the changes that he made are founded on his belief, already explained in _The Cloud_, that rather than the intellect or imagination, love is the means by which the soul is united to God.21 In emphasizing love's pre-eminence he moderates Dionysius' philosophical abstractions by introducing affective, experiential, personal, and explanatory elements. These intrusions recapture _The Cloud_'s presentation of contemplation as a vigorous human activity. The author's reservations about learning and learned men are used to soften further
the sources' intellectual language. However an exception occurs at the end, where Dionysius demonstrates the moment of the intellect's failing through an exaggerated textuality which stretches language beyond its limits. Here the Cloud-author extends the sources' linguistic overreaching to the point where a silence eloquent with the divine mystery intervenes. In reapplying another technique perfected in The Cloud, the translation thus mimics the surrender in contemplation of the flow of thoughts to 'affecyon abouen mynde' (Deonise Hid Divinite, 1.2). The author begins to diverge from his sources' scholarly status by translating 'theologia', found in the titles of all surviving Latin versions, not by 'theologie', which by then was an accepted English word, but by the older Latin borrowing 'diuinite'. Since 'diuinite' can mean either 'theology' or 'godhead', the English version maintains an outward faithfulness to the original. However it imports the suggestion that this work, like The Cloud, is 'A Book of Contemplacyon', the words and structure of which will themselves assist the reader's practical efforts to attain knowledge of a God 'hidden' to the intellect. A later mistranslation of Sarracenus' 'Theologiam' as 'Cristes diuinitee' (4.13) meaning 'divine nature', and an added reference to 'pis deuinite' (6.32) meaning 'contemplative method', further support this interpretation. In the same way an address of the opening prayer to 'Wysdome', a concept favoured by Dionysius but often a portmanteau term for contemplation, replaces the conventionally theological 'Trinitas', which again is found in all known Latin versions. Whereas Sarracenus gives the ending as 'igitur ista mihi quidem sint oratione postulata' ('Therefore may these things asked for in my prayer indeed be mine'), implying an exemplary function, the Cloud-author personalizes the opening with added first- and second-person pronouns: 'Pou vnbigonne & euerlastyng Wysdome' (1.14) ... 'I beseeche jet (2.17). He thus invites the reader to take part in the prayer. Deonise Hid Divinite personalizes the divine to approximately the level reached in The Cloud. Intruded personal pronouns continue to be applied to God, extending the effect achieved in the opening prayer (2.19; 5.23; 5.31; 7.18f.; 7.32–8.1). Additions of 'hym', 'himself' and an insertion to the effect that the true understanding should be held by faith ('fastliche for to holde in si3t of byleue') qualify the abstraction of Dionysius' thought about the primal cause (4.1–10). Two references to Christ are also added (4.13). Where Sarracenus writes: 'quomodo divina et bona natura singularis dicitur', the translation retains Anglicized forms of the adjectives, but undermines their abstraction with an Anglo-Saxon noun and definitions: 'how pat hige, deuine synguleer kynde, pe whiche is God, is one' (7.14f.). By preferring Gallus' Extraf/io over Sarracenus, the conclusion to chapter 3 replaces non-personal with personal constructions. However in a contrary procedure in chapter 5, based on Gallus, God is referred to as 'he' following Sarracenus, in preference to Gallus' 'omnia causas' (9.26). Furthermore, the first of a series of interpolated references to 'affecyon' as a supra-rational faculty for apprehending the divine expands Sarracenus' conclusion to the prayer quoted above, so that it reads as follows: 'And for alle
pees pinges ben abouen mynde, perfere wip affeccioun abouen mynde as I may, I
desire to purchase hem vnto me wip pis preier' (2.25–7). The expansion imposes
on the source a proposition that the author had explored empirically in The Cloud,
namely that a mind focused on God's substance operates above the ordinary
human level (120.2–8). By touching on the theme of longing also recurrent in
The Cloud, it grounds in the reader's desire the paradoxical abstractions of
Dionysius' address to a divinity opaque to intellectual seeking.

While the interpolations involving 'affeccioun' are confined to the long first
chapter of the Cloud-author's translation, which is mostly based on Sarracenus,
they have the effect of extending Gallus' doctrinal influence in the form in which
it already appears in the affective focus of The Cloud. However, only one of the
interpolations (3.15) draws on Gallus' writings as a direct source, and even here
his equivalent word is 'dilectio'. The author therefore appears to be acting
independently in giving prominence to 'affeccioun'. In The Cloud his chosen term
for the faculty by which God may be 'getyn & holden' is 'loue' (26.4f.), meaning
the soul's will and power to love (18.11–20). However by the time of writing
'affeccioun' was thoroughly acclimatized in English devotional texts including
The Cloud, and the author's preference in Deollise Hid DiNillite for 'affeccioun' is thus
a relatively minor concession to Sarracenus' abstract Latin vocabulary and the
status of the Nova translatio as theology. Moreover the interpolated references to
'affeccioun' are a technique of emotional enrichment appropriate to the
Cloud-author's practical contemplative purpose and to his recognition in The
Cloud that the 'swetnes of loue' (46.18) is also a feeling; 'pe felyng of pis is eend1es blisse'
(19.13). In Deollise Hid DiNillite a later pair of examples expands the description,
'munde . . . cuncta suferens et a cunctis absolutus', with an acknowledgement of
human complexity: 'makynge biself cleene fro al wordly, fleschly, & kyndely likyng
in bi affeccioun' (3.14f.). This prepares for the contemplative reader's again
being 'drawen up abouen mynde in affeccioun' (301M.) to the divine darkness.
Two final insertions of 'affeccioun' (4.2", 5.15) likewise relate to contemplative
practice rather than to theory.

The drift to an experiential orientation in Deonise Hid Diuinite is confirmed
by the opening to chapter 1. Here, in an expansion unparalleled in Sarracenus
or Gallus, the author fictionalizes Timothy's and the reader's state at the
commencement of contemplative practice: 'what tyme pat pou purposist pee by
he steryng of grace to he actueel excersise of pi blynde beholclynges' (2.31f.).
The Cloud's focus on the novice's preliminary progress in chapters 1 and 2 is
comparable. A parallel resort to narrative occurs in an introduction added in
Deonise Hid Diuinite to Sarracenus' account of Moses on Sinai: 'Ensample of
pis se by he storie how ...
(4.27). An interpolated reminder of context likewise recalls the development of this narrative, based on Benjamin major, in the climax
to The Cloud: 'In pis tyne it was pat Moyses in synygeltee of affeccioun was
departid from pees beforeseyde chosen preestes' (5.15L). Moses' separation is
not referred to in the sources, but recalls contrasts in The Cloud among Moses,
Bezaleel, and Aaron as priest. Chapter 1 of the translation concludes by again
invoking a dimension of the contemplative's affective experience that goes
beyond Sarracenus, whose difficult Latin the author partly mistranslates in a way that rules out pantheistic implications: 'for to feel in experience the presence of hym pat is abouen alle things, not haung felyng ne thinkyng of no beyng thing' (1.19-21).

Again, when the author describes the ascent to transcendence as occurring 'somtyme sodeyner pen oper' (8.19), he recaptures *The Cloud's* interest in the duration of contemplation. Among other experiential additions reminiscent of *The Cloud* is his exhortation to be 'sley3' and 'listi' (3.1). 'Sley3' and its cognate 'sld3t' (referring to the strategic working of grace) are interpolated again later, also in relation to contemplation (6.27, 6.26). First recorded in English in *The Cloud*, 'listi' and 'listely' designate enthusiasm for spiritual practice. Together 'sley3' and 'listi' denote an eagerness tempered by wisdom, and in *The Cloud* they encompass the notion of contemplation as play. This nexus recurs over several chapters and includes an explanation of the significance for contemplation of the proverb, 'wirche more wip a list pen wip any liper strengpe' (87.6f.). Deonise Hid Divinile therefore qualifies the Latin text's recommendation of strength with the sagacious easeful approach evoked by the language of *The Cloud*.

Further psychological and theological modifications recapture features of *The Cloud*. The author's reiterated distinction in the earlier work between 'bodily wittes' and 'goosdy wittes' is used to extend Sarracenus' generalized allusions to physical perception. The translation adds a definition of 'bodily wittes': 'as heryng, seyng, smelling, taastyng, & touching' (3.2.), and specifies separate areas of operation for the bodily and spiritual senses: 'alle woo thinges, pe whiche mowe be knowen wip any of bi fynce bodily wittes without-forpe; and alle woo thinges pe whiche mow be known by bi goostly wittes wipinne-forp' (3.3-6). An added dismissal of those 'wonyng 3it not only in here goostly wittes of natured philosophie, bot lowe downe bynepe in here bodily wittes, pe whiche hauen bot in comoun with only beestes' (3.27-30) recalls the satiric cameos in *The Cloud* of misguided contemplatives who mistake bodily feelings for spiritual working (chapters 51-3). Finally, Deonise Hid Divinile modifies Sarracenus' representation of Dionysius' theology with intruded references to grace, a doctrine which, in accordance with Augustinian tradition, including Gallus, pervades *The Cloud*.

In yet another significant parallel to *The Cloud*, where the author creates recognizable identities for himself and his disciple, Deonise Hid Divinile strengthens the sense of a speaker and a hearer for its message. Authorial first-person pronouns are introduced in such phrases as 'I beseche thee' (2.17); 'as I may' (2.26); and 'I haue affermyngliche set' (7.19). Where Sarracenus reads 'quid dicat quidem aliquis?', the translation personalizes to: 'what schul I say ... ? (3.27). Gallus' 'removetur ab eo' in the *Extractio* similarly becomes 'we schuld do awey from hym' (8.33). As reader's representative, the apostle Timothy is actualized in the opening by intruded second-person pronouns and by translating Sarracenus' adverb 'ignote' as 'in a maner that he wost not how' (3.11). This parallels such phrases in *The Cloud* as 'he wost neuer how' (16.14) and 'he wost neuer what' (17.1), and alludes to the earlier work's many
evocations of the desired contemplative state of unknowing. Again, The Cloud constructs the author and disciple as fellow contemplatives: 'sifen we ben bope clpid of God to worche in his werk' (129.10f). Deonist Hid Divinites recreates this relationship in two interpolations: 'as it is possible to me for te speke & to þee to vnderstonde, loke þat þou riþe wiþ me in his grace' (1.9; Sarracenus: 'sicest est possibile, ignote consurge'); and 'us alle þat ben practisers of his deuniti' (6.32; no Latin parallel).

The Cloud survives in the twenty-first century as a guide to contemplation because of the subtlety and practicality of its teaching. The vernacular assertiveness that distinguishes it as text in its Middle English setting erupts in Deonist Hid Divinites in the form of oppositions: 'It is noþing þus: but þus most it be' (4.1; no Latin equivalent); 'not to alle, but to hem only' (4.10f.; Sarracenus: 'his qui'). It also takes the form of emphases: 'þe whiche in himself is abouen alle, þat bope doyng awey and affermyng of hem alle' (4.10f.; Sarracenus: 'quae est super omnem ablationem et positionem'). Similarly, the author augments the Extractio by adding energetic repetitions of 'al' to the list of bodily things to be taken away in the effort to conceptualize the divine nature (9.15–20). This strategy enlarges his vivid demonstration in The Cloud that 'n03 where boddy is euerywhere goedy', a proposition to be experienced as true by those who renounce the intervention of the senses in spiritual working (I U .1 S -2.1).

A related interpolation articulates his prejudice against those who create figures of God and spiritual things 'in here fanwtik ymagynatyue wittes' (3.11). The author's vigour of utterance sometimes takes the form of removing qualifications. He translates as superlatives a series of Latin comparatives designating spiritual things close to God (8.10, 17, 18, 23, 24, 27), and excises modest implications of doubt: 'betokenip' translates Sarracenus' 'hoc autem puto significare' (S .6) and his 'sicut arbitror' is omitted (6.11).

Commentators have noted The Cloud's use of vivid physical imagery. However The Cloud also seeks to negate the physical associative properties of the metaphors that it applies to God and contemplation by upholding their figurative status: 'þe wene not, for I clepe it a derknes or a cloude, þat it be any cloude congellid of þe humours þat fleen in þe ayre, ne 3it any derknes soche as is in þin house on niþtes, when þi candel is oute' (11.13–15). This same tension persists in Deonist Hid Divinites in interpolated figures and analogies that alternate with efforts to limit or thwart the imagination. Among the interpolated images is a simile, 'as þe lady hap hir maydens' (5.8), that was domesticated in the Cloud group by the translated allegory of Jacob's wives and their handmaids in Benjamin minor. In Deonist Hid Divinites it further elucidates the subordination of the intellect in contemplation. Supplementary kinaesthetic metaphors of drawing up, fastening, and folding likewise recall the exposition of contemplation as an energetic human work in The Cloud, where each of these actions conveys an aspect of practice or experience.

The most substantial remaking of sources in Deonist Hid Divinites is the author's treatment of Dionysius' brief sculpting analogy. This is translated by Sarracenus and slightly expanded in Gallus. The Cloud-author's alternating
augmentation and undercutting of figures relating to contemplation adapts the analogy to the teaching and vocabulary of *The Cloud*, while again theorizing a distrust of the intellect as a faculty for approaching uncreated being.

As elsewhere, the English text initially inflates the likeness with experiential details. The ‘facientes’ and ‘artifices’ in Sarracenus and Gallus are replaced by a situation and a character: ‘Here is a man hauyng a sounde stok of þe gresttest quantitee wipoutyn hym, liyng before hym, and hauyng wipinne hym entent ...’ (1.3.1−3). The inner-outer balance thus established persists through a psychodrama, invented by the author, of uncovering the divine image at the centre of the block. Details of the artist’s preliminary imaginative grasp of the image are added. The analogy describes how he finds the centre by ‘mesuryng of riȝt lynyng’ (6.4), and the ‘craft’ and ‘instrumentes’ that he uses to carve away the obscuring wood (6.7). The changes again encompass *The Cloud’s* view of contemplation as a ‘werk’, while the adapted analogy’s fusing of the artist’s imagination with the physical world recaptures yet another emphasis of *The Cloud*, where this fusing is seen as a cause of erroneous working (94.2.4−4).

Therefore it is not surprising that the author proceeds to undermine the imaginative analogy at the point of application: ‘Riȝt so we must haue us in iȝis hiȝe deuyne werk, as it is possible to be comyn to in vnderstondyng by soche a boistous ensaumple of so contrary a kynde’ (6.9−11).

After thus rejecting the bodily ‘ensaumple’ suggested by his sources, the author provides an alternative spiritualized analogy. This begins with a lucid evocation, unparalleled in Sarracenus or Gallus, of the divine ‘kynde’ hidden at the centre of the block. In re-creating this central Dionysian conception, the Anglo-Saxon words retain paradox as an anti-intellectual device, while avoiding the abstract Latinity typical of the sources:

\[\begin{align*}
\text{þof it be in itself} & \text{ & to itself euermore free} \quad \text{wipinne alle creatures, not inclusid;} \\
\text{wipouten alle creatures, not sehit oute;} & \text{abouen alle creatures, not borne up;} \\
\text{bine þe alle creatures, not put doun; behynde alle creatures, not put bak; before} & \text{alle creatures, not dreuen forþe} \\
\end{align*}\]

(6.15−17)

However these terms too are revealed to be inadequate, since the divine image cannot be grasped by an embodied understanding (6.18f.), in which it is overlaid and obstructed,

\[\begin{align*}
wip \text{vonnuemerable sensible bodies} & \text{ & vnderstondable substaunces, wip many a} \\
\text{meruelous fantastik ymage, conieliid as it were in a kumbros clog abouten hym,} & \text{as þe ymage of þe ensaumple wretyn before is hid in þe ßik, greet, sounde stok.} \\
\text{(6.20−4)} & \\
\end{align*}\]

This culminating redefining of the block as the complex faculties of body and mind affirms yet again the deceptiveness of the imagination and the bodily figures that it creates.

Earlier *Deuotie Hid Diuinite* had dismissed those who seek to reach the first cause ‘bi making of figures of þe last and þe leest worþi þinges of þeis beyng visible þinges, as stockes or stones ...’ (3.31f.). This dismissal foreshadows the translator’s rejection of his sources’ analogy as a deceptive product of the
bodily imagination. The dismissal's concluding phrase, equivalent to 'scilicet lapidibus et metallis' in the Extraitio, is conventionally applied in Middle English to the worship of false gods. These additional negative resonances persist in the analogy's construction and reconstruction, which emphasize the physicality of the 'stok' as 'a kumbrous clog' of thoughts and images aligns it with the congealed 'lump' in The Cloud of all sins together, 'none ober þing þan bi-self' (73.17f.).

Deonis Hid Diviniti further adjusts the reconstructed analogy to contemplative practice by a first-person application of The Cloud's teaching and an infusion of its terms: 'For we moten be in ðis werk as it were men makyn an ymage of his nakyd, vnaad, & vnbignonne kynde ...' (6.17f.); and 'þe whiche koubrous cloggge ... we moten algetes craftely pare away by sleiȝt of grace in þis deyne werk' (6.24–6). Ineffability and practicality remain paramount to the end: 'in a maner þat is vknowne how vnto alle, bot only þat þat þrope; & æt euermore þat þrope same, bot onliche in tyme of þe proef' (6.29–31). These assertions parallel the final chapters of The Cloud, which stress the incommunicability of fulfilled contemplation, 'þis nouȝt when it is nouȝwre wrouȝt' (122.18f.), and caution against the mistake of judging others' experience by one's own (chapter 72).

Outside the analogy, other modifications in Deonis Hid Diviniti focus on the limits of the intellect's attainment in contemplation. They thus recapitulate a message delivered empirically and theoretically in The Cloud. For example, an interpolated clause defines 'summitatem divinarum ascensionum' as 'þe teermes & þe boundes of mans vnderstondyng, be it neuer so holpen wip grace' (9.1f.). Again, the translation re-emphasizes God's transcendence 'of alle vnderstondeable þinges ... & alle vnderstondeyng' (8.25f.) with a vigorous added complexio: 'And ȝit he in hymself is abouen boþe alle spekyng and alle vnderstondeyng' (8.34f.).

Like The Cloud, Deonis Hid Diviniti extends the Pseudo-Dionysius' use of paradox. In the first instance, 'þynyng beholdyngs' is imported from The Cloud (32.7) to translate Sarracenus' non-paradoxical 'mysticas visiones'. Elsewhere 'mysticus' is translated as 'derke' (3.19) and 'hid' (title and 5.18). The enigma inherent in 'þynyng beholdyngs' encourages and perhaps produces the renunciation of conceptual thinking that is basic to the Cloud-author's contemplative method. Secondly, Sarracenus' 'nullus indiectorum' is rendered paradoxically as 'none of þees vnwise men ȝit wonyng in
here witty's' (3.19f.), thereby reinforcing the author's conviction of the inferiority of intellectual working to contemplative love. Finally, where Sarracenus presents the insights gained in contemplation paradoxically: 'et per non videre et per ignorare, videre et cognoscere', the translation heightens the contrast by applying The Cloud's central negation: 'et, bi noust seeyng & vnknowyng, for to see & for to knowe' (5.27f.). This change is repeated when the goal of contemplation is condensed as 'knowe bat vnknowyng' (7.5; Sarracenus, 'cognoscamus illam ignorantiam'). This phrase draws on the quotation from On the Divine Names in The Cloud with which this essay began. In Deonise Hid Divinitie as in The Cloud, the author uses 'vnknowyng', which connotes activity, for the highest contemplative experience; he rejects the Latinate equivalent word 'ignoraunce', which in The Cloud retains its derogatory passive associations.

The state of 'vnknowyng' is captured in Gallus' Extractio in a conclusion that overstrains language in an apparent effort to cross from text into transcendence. The ensuing silence resonates not only with the failing of concepts but also with the possibility of a supra-rational understanding:

> ipsum neque ponimus neque luferimus; quoniam et super omnem positionem est perfecta et unica omnium causa, et super omnem ablationem est excessus ipsius ab omnibus absolui et super omnia eminens.

The English version goes even further in challenging the limits of linguistic possibility. It demonstrates the failing of the intellectual powers through multiple reiterations, and piles up superlatives and antitheses in its ascent to an even more eloquent silence:

> hym we mowe neithe set ne do awey, ne on any understandable maner affirme him, ne denie him. For pe partite & pe singuleer cause of al most wellefyng be wifhwn comparison of pe most heip heip heip abouen alle, bope setnyng & doyng awey. And his not-understandable ouerpasing is sm-understandably abouen alle afflyng and denings.

(10.17-23; italics indicate interpolations)

The Cloud applies a parallel technique in a passage which recommends attaching 'a litil worde of o silable' to the divinely inspired 'steryng of loue' which is the essence of 'pe work' (28.10-29.6). The discussion is unified on repetitions of 'worde', which is first linked with warrior metaphors (28.17-20) but later mimes the practice of mental repetition being taught. As the overtures of a distracting thought that offers 'of his grete clergie' to expound the 'worde' are progressively rejected (29.1-4), both textual 'worde' and 'worde' as contemplative vehicle merge into a stillness filled with potentiality.

The Cloud-author's remaking of the Mystical Theology is therefore not minor but significant. Insofar as his choices as translator buttress and recapitulate his own spiritual and writing practices previously developed in The Cloud, his remaking is also innovative and daring. His many departures from his Latin sources follow the trends discussed above. Expanded references to the limitations of the intellect and language and recollections of his resistance in The Cloud to the pretensions of learning signal a reduced tolerance in Deonise Hid Divinitie for scholarly abstractions. The Cloud's exposure of the deceptiveness

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of the imagination as an aspect of bodily existence and therefore a hindrance to contemplation takes the form in the translation of an initial undermining, followed by a radical reconceptualizing, of Sarracenus' and Gallus' sculpting analogy. This same expansion contains the author's exegesis of an indwelling divine nature open to exploration 'in his deuine werk' (6.16). The translation's doctrinal adjustments include interjected references to grace and a personalizing of the divine in a way that differentiates it from a philosophical postulate. Yet other changes reintroduce the author's characteristic robustness of tone and contribute to a sense of his own reality and that of his reader.

It remains to consider how Deonis Hid DiNinite falls within the flourishing traditions of medieval translation theory and practice. In tracing the theory from its classical origins, Rita Copeland reveals how the paradox inherent in translation as 'a sign of both continuity and rupture' coalesced with a series of rethinkings to produce a range of options. Cicero's *De optimo genere oratorum* authorized a view of translation as contending against the source text that it sought to displace and replace, as the translator laboured to expand the literary capacity of his own language. In *De doctrina christiana* Augustine transmitted a related view of translation as a function of the rhetorical act of *invenio*, a discovery or 'coming upon' of multilayered meanings in Scripture that it was the exegete's task to reconfigure as text and language. A contrary stream of opinion sanctioned by St Jerome's prescription for Bible translation as a faithful replication of the word of God diluted this understanding.

*Deonis Hid DiNinite* falls nearer to the creative end of the spectrum of approaches. The author's stated purpose in translating, quoted above, is to 'aferme' his teaching by resorting to Dionysius as a respected 'doctour'. His intention to follow 'be nakid letter of be text' suggests that his purpose is not to displace his Latin sources, but his rewriting of the sculpting analogy militates against this. Moreover, a cultural transference, comparable with that aimed at in Cicero's translations from Greek, has taken place, in the vigorous English tone of *Deonis Hid DiNinite*, and the 'translation' of the text to a practical contemplative, probably Carthusian, context. The author's experiments with the liminal space between vernacular language and the silence of contemplation, as well as the neologisms discussed by Hodgson and Lees, are original features that 'discover' the potential of English and help to establish its credentials. Hodgson rightly describes the author as 'an inventor who enriched the language by his attempts to express philosophical and theological conceptions'.

In this respect the contemporary text with which *Deonis Hid DiNinite* has most in common is Chaucer's translation of Boethius' *Consolatio*. Like the author, Chaucer regarded his work as a 'translacion', and Copeland and Tim Machan have analysed the *Boece* for the insights it provides into late fourteenth-century understanding of the term. Three points of comparison with *Deonis Hid DiNinite* are evident. First, the author selected his sources from a Pseudo-Dionysian textual tradition in a way that parallels Chaucer's selection of mixed Latin and French sources from an admittedly richer Boethian tradition. Secondly, like the *Boece*, *Deonis Hid DiNinite* conflates the two main components
of medieval translation identified by Copeland: *interpretatio*, or exegesis as an act that goes beyond mere replication; and *exercitatio*, or an instructive exercise that enables a 'discovery ... of one's own language'. Nevertheless, and this is the third point, both *Deonis Hit Diunicite* and the *Beoe* adapt a challenging but revered philosophy for an audience more concerned with sentence than aesthetic effect. In applying techniques for engaging such an audience, the Cloud-author's stance as a translator is comparable with Chaucer's, for whom 'the Consolation was a living text which invited reader involvement'.

The merging of roles of expiator and translator traced by Copeland underpins the author's approval of Gallus as 'a noble & a worpi expositour', and it is likely that he saw his use of the *Extractio* as an extension of Gallus' work. The distinction between Gallus and Eriugena, who was, and who regarded himself as, a *filius interpretis*, is a feature of Pseudo-Dionysian tradition that the Cloud-author probably knew. As an expiator he complied with current expectations regarding translation. However, in adapting his version of the *Mystical Theology* to the approach and tenets of *The Cloud*, he moved beyond exposition and resumed his pre-existing stance as *auctor*, yet another category that the period imperfectly distinguished from translator.

The breadth of the author's self-positioning in relation to *Deonis Hit Diunicite* evokes the innovatory nature of that work and *The Cloud* as the only vernacular texts at the time of writing to offer Pseudo-Dionysian philosophy to an English audience. The defensive strategies of *The Cloud*, and the author's intention that each work should affirm the other, suggest that they met with resistance from some readers or from the Church. Like contemplative texts in other historical periods, they seem to have occupied the unstable creative margins of the religious culture that produced them.

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NOTES


2 'Qui habet aures audiendi, audiat' (Matthew x.11; xiii.9; xiii.43; Mark iv.9; iv.23; vii.16; Luke viii.8; xiv.33).


4 For borrowings from Hilton, see John P. H. Clark, *The Cloud of Unknowing: An
6 Clark argues that The Cloud responds to arguments in book 1 of The Scale (The Cloud of Unknowing: An Introduction, I, 86-8), and that it initiated a series of exchanges in treatises by both authors that continued until Hilton completed the second book of The Scale shortly before his death on 24 March 1396.
7 Page and line references are to 'Dionisi Fid Dionisi' and Other Treatises on Contemplative Prayer Related to The Cloud of Unknowing, ed. Phyllis Hodgson, EETS, Os 231 (London, 1911).
10 The present argument is based on a comparison of Hodgson's text with the following sources: Sarracenus' Nova translatio and Gallus' Explanatio in Dionysiaca: Renouf donnant l'ensemble des traductions latines des ouvrages attribués au Denis l'Arlequin, ed. Dom Philippe Chevallier, 2 vols (Paris, 1937), I, 165-602 and 709-12; and the quotations from Gallus' Explanatio in British Library, Royal MS G.4v printed by Hodgson. Clark points out that Gallus may not be the author of the Expositiones sua glossae (PL, CXII, cols 679-84), diversely attributed to Eriugena, Adam Marsh, and Peter of Spain, and he finds Hodgson's view that this work was a supplementary source for Dionisi Fid Dionisi 'less persuasive' (The Cloud: An Introduction, I, 61f). My observation is that none of the parallels adduced by Hodgson in her editions establishes her case for direct borrowing from the Gloss.
12 Lees, Negative Language, II, 182.
13 Dionisi Fid Dionisi, ed. Hodgson, p. xliii.
14 Ibid., p. xliii.
15 Lees, Negative Language, II, 188.
16 Ibid., II, 209.
17 The Cloud also draws on On the Divine Names, as the above quotation and other references confirm. See Clark, The Cloud of Unknowing: An Introduction, I, 13.
19 'Sarracenus ... undertakes to align the Dionysian corpus — insofar as his role as translator permits — with the traditional Christianity of the Western Church for which his text was compiled' (Lees, Negative Language, II, 179).
20 Minnis refers to Gallus as having 'medievalized' the Mystical Theology (The sources of The Cloud, p. 65); similarly Lees: 'It was principally at the hands of Thomas Gallus ... that Sarracenus's latinization of the Dionysian corpus and his project to establish beyond question its total accord with orthodox Christian theology was finally brought to full
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effect' (Negative Language, II, 181); Thomas Gallus was largely instrumental in ensuring the assimilation of Dionysian theology into the mainstream of Christian tradition in the West' (II, 193).

See Minnis, 'The sources of The Cloud', pp. 64f.


23 'Book of Contemplacyon' occurs in the title to The Cloud in Cambridge University Library, MS E.6.39 and MS Kk.6.26; London, British Library, Harley MS 6959; and Dublin, Trinity College, MS 122: The texts in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 176 and MS Douce 162; London, British Library, Royal MS 17 C.26; and Parkminster, MS D 176 refer in their titles to 'deiune clowde'. The repetition 'deiune'/diuinite' may reflect the author's view of The Cloud and Deonis Hid Diuinite as companion texts.

24 The change to 'Wysdome' aligns Deonis Hid Diuinite with the Middle English translation of Benjamin minor, described in its opening sentence as 'a book ... of the studie of wisdom' (Deonis Hid Diuinite, ed. Hodgson (1931), 12.4). This work traces the purification of the faculties in contemplation through a biblical allegory of Jacob, his wives, and their maidservants. Probably not the work of the Cloud-author, A Treatise of the Study of Wisdom accompanies his authentic works in four manuscripts.

25 For example, when Sarracenus writes: 'Quoniam hoc quod est super omnem positionem ponentes ...', Deonis Hid Diuinite inserts a clause from Gallus: 'For whan we wolen merk God by settyng ...', followed by a modification of Sarracenus: 'pe whiche in hymself is absonen alle settyng ...' (8.14f).

26 The translator personalizes or simplifies others of Sarracenus' and Gallus' formulations: 'ad divina Dei' becomes 'unto God' (7.30), 'Deus' becomes 'he' (10.9), and 'in Verbo' becomes 'in hym' (10.12).

27 e.g. chapter 1 develops the metaphor of 'a lyame of longing' (Cloud 14.4). After exploring the error of a bodily directing of the mind upward in the time of prayer (11.1–2), chapter 6o refers to: 'beire loue & beire desire, be which is goodly beire liif' (11.2.5–18).

28 'Per unitionem dilectionis' (Extractio) is translated 'syngulertye of afteccioun' (Deonis Hid Diuinite 5.15).

29 The Cloud combines the terms in the phrase, 'an affectuous stering of loue to God' (35.1f), and defines virtue as 'an ordinde & a mesurid afteccion, pleine directe vnto God for him-self' (39.17). 'Affectioun', meaning the feeling faculty, is again linked with love in the phrase, 'Pon schalt þou feile pyn affectiion enflamid wiþ þe fire of his loue' (62.17f).

30 Lees, Negative Language, II, 201.

31 The translator is faithful to the biblical account in adding references to the cleansing of the people (Deonis Hid Diuinite 4.28f; Exodus xix.10, 14f). However neither Dionysius' statement that Moses received the commandments accompanied by chosen priests (Sarracenus: 'cum electis sacerdotis'), nor the impression given in the English that he was alone, is biblically exact, since God commands Aaron to accompany him (Exodus xix.24).

32 Sarracenus: 'et impalpabili ommino et invisibili fit, omnis existens ejus qui est super omnia, et nullius, necque suipcis, necque alterius.' This translates as: 'and he is made [or wrapped in; adheres to] wholly of him [add who in] intangible and invisible, his whole being [add consisting of the One, or belonging to the One] who is above all, and of none else, neither of himself, nor of another.'
was he Sarracenus:
in descriptions of spiritual 'slei3ts' (enthuisiasm) with true spiritual working and a courtesy in contemplation that is the opposite of bodily straining: 'leerne pee to lose litels wip a softe & demure contenance, as wel in body as in soule' (Cloud 87.16f.). Chapter 47, described in its heading as offering a 'sleyt' (meaning 'subtle') teaching, develops the insight that the contemplative's playful hiding from God of desire for him casts that desire 'into depoes of spirite, fer fro any rude medelyng of any bodelines' (89.16f.).

Repeated in An Epistle of Prayer, the proverb is again linked with the word-stem 'sleyt': '... it is my counsel þat þou seke sleiætes, for "Beitir is list þan leþir strenge"' (Dunnis Hid Diesuïnt, ed. Hodgson (1951), 18.1-2). The same combination occurs as an addition to the Latin source in A Treatise of the Study of Wisdom. 'For beitir is a sley man þan a strong man, 3c. and betryr is list þen libër strenge. And a sley man spekip of victories' (Dunnis Hid Diesuïnt, 41.5-9). The repetitions suggest that the author's circle explored the proverb's relevance to contemplation.

The Cloud's recommendation of contemplation as play, established in chapter 32 in descriptions of spiritual 'sleiætes' ('devices') that are compared with childlike play (67.10-13), recurs in chapter 46 (87.19-88.4), following a passage that associates 'list' (enlarge) with true spiritual working and a courtesy in contemplation that is the opposite of bodily straining: 'leerne þee to lose littly wip a softe & demure contenance, as wel in body as in soule' (Cloud 87.16f.). Chapter 47, described in its heading as offering a 'sleyt' (meaning 'subtle') teaching, develops the insight that the contemplative's playful hiding from God of desire for him casts that desire 'into depoes of spirite, fer fro any rude medelyng of any bodelines' (89.16f.).

A reference to grace is introduced from Gallus into an early passage based on Sarracenus (2.32). Unsourced references to grace are added at 310 and 3.6f.

These occur in the following phrases: 'þou purposist þee', 'þi blaynde beholdynge', 'loke þou', 'þi bodily wite', 'þi goostly wite', 'þin vnderstaned worchinges', 'þin affercioun'.

For example, an account of the spiritual depth to be achieved by a repeated one-syllable prayer (which however must not become a substitute for the prayer of the Church) ends with the assertion: 'þe & þat þ þere þere eres of Almyȝtu God þan drif any longe saunter vnmyndfully mumlyd in þe teep' (71.4).

The Cloud develops the theme both briefly in similar words, e.g. 'a proude, coryous & an ymagynatwyfe wître' (12.18f.), 'corious & ymagynatyue wître' (94. 21f.), and at length: 'pees men willen sumtyme wip þe cariouse of here ymagynacion peere þe planeset, & make a hole in þe firmament to loke in þeberate. Pees men wil make a God as hem lyst, & clopen hym ful richely in clopes, & set hym in a trone, fer mor curiosely þan euer was he depeyned in þis erpe' (105. 9-14). The contemplatives portrayed as deceived by bodily feelings and by 'pride & coryousete of wître' (99.20f.) are said to 'trauye þeir ymagynacion so vndiscreedy, þat at þe laste þei tunne here brayne in here hedes' (96.22-4).


In the opening prayer a metaphor, 'drawe us up', replaces Sarracenus' 'dirige nos'. Later the author translates Sarracenus: 'istos suntem duco qui in existentibus sunt formati', meaning 'conformed', 'adjusted', as 'alle þou þat buen fastyned in knowynge & louynge of þeis þinges þat buen knowable and han bigynnyng' (3.20f.). Finally, an interpolated metaphor sums up the effort of removing concepts: 'we foulden alle togyder & done hem away' (7.4f.; Sarracenus: 'omnia auferimus').

E.g. 'lat God drawe þi loue up to þat cloude' (14.20f.); 'faste nud bi it a lyame of longynge' (14.3f.); 'haue þis entent lappid & foulden in o woede' (28.10).
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45. e.g. "Mechil more dyshonour doo we to God ... jif we wursheyn stockys or stonys or onye ymagys" (Dives and Pasper 1.90). The MED gives further examples.

46. In The Cloud the 'lump' undergoes a series of transformations that are theologically more venturesome than those of the 'stok'. The author first invites the contemplative aspirant to consider, not individual sins, but sin as a lump, identified with the self (Cloud 78.11f.). For as long as he lives, he will 'fele in som partye his foule stynkyng lump of synne, as it were onyd & congelid with pe substance of his byeing' (79.13-15). If he persists in contemplation he will experience the lump as a barrier of sin/self separating him from God (82.13-17); and later as the deepest apprehension of selfhood, which must be forsaken (84.14). The most original aspect of the author's thought on the lump of sin is nevertheless his identification of it, in terminology that he was to repeat in Denun Hid Divinita, with 'his cambrus cloude of vnknowynge' (63.22). The contemplative experiences the cloud in this life (122.11f.), as 'synne a lumpe, he wote neuer what, none ope or peyn þan hym-self', i.e. as the remaining root and pain of original sin (123.16f.). Not even persistence in contemplative grace can entirely rub away the cloud/lump in this life (123.11f.). At other times however the contemplative experiences it as 'paradis or heuenn' (123.19f.), and even as God (123.21). The Cloud's references to being encumbered by the burden of sin (38.1, 78.24) and by a studied outward demeanour (99.1) further foreshadow the encumbering block in Denun Hid Divinita. Both sequences may build on Hilton, who writes of being encumbered with oneself in bodily feeling (The Scale of Perfection, book 1, ch. 88).

47. Compare The Cloud: 'pe nakid being of God him-self only' (32.7f.); 'a nakid wetyng & a felyng of þin owne byeing' (83.1).

48. Compare The Cloud: 'Somtyme we profite in þis grace by oure owne goostly sleight, holpyn wip grace' (118.17f.).

49. In The Cloud bodily language and the misconceiving of spiritual instruction in physical terms are denounced as sources of error, e.g. 'A yong man or a woman, newes set to þe scule of devocion, hereþ þis sorow & þis desire be red & spokyn, how þat a man schal lift up his herte vnto God, & vnseeingly desire for to fele þe loue of here God. & as fast in a curiousté of witte þei conceyue þe wordes not goostly, as þei ben ment, bot fleschly & bodily, & trauaylen þeire fleschly hertes outrageousely in þeire brestes' (81.11-21). This attitude seems to have led to a reversal in Denun Hid Divinita of Sarraucens' statement that words can only express conceptions that can be grasped by the intellect, in that 'tantum sermones conspectibus intelligibilium contrahuntur' becomes: 'in-so-moche þe wordes þat ben spokyn of him to oure beholdynes maken streite oure vnderstondyng' (8.10-12).

50. The phrase 'blynde beholdynys' in Denun Hid Divinita forms a bridge between The Cloud and The Book of Priye Counseling, the author's last known composition, where it takes various syntactical shapes (109.12, 142.9-12, 143.22, 144.1-3).

51. e.g. '... alle actyues pleynen hem of contemplaeryes, as Martha did on Mary; of þe whiche pleyngyng ignorance is þe cause' (Cloud 3.19f.); 'myn ignoraunte defautes ... oper mens ignorante wordes & dedes' (51.1f.).

52. The Ninos translatus is similar: 'ipsam neque ponimus neque auferimus; quoniam et super omnem positionem est perfecta et univis omnia causas, et super omnem ablationem est excessus ab omnibus simpliciter absoluti et super totalis.'


54. Rita Copeland, 'The fortunes of Non verbum pro verbo: or, why Jerome is not a...
Ciceronian', in *The Medieval Translator*, ed. Ellis, pp. 15–35 (pp. 17–19).


56 Copeland, 'The fortunes of *Non verbum pro verbo*, p. 21.


58 *Demus Hid Diuinus*, introduction, p. xxxiii.


60 Machan, 'Editorial method and medieval translations', pp. 189f.

61 Copeland, 'Rhetoric and vernacular translation', p. 44.


63 Ibid., p. 193.

64 Copeland, 'The fortunes of *Non verbum pro verbo*, pp. 50f.

65 Machan, 'Chaucer as translator', p. 62.