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**'I this book shal make':  
Thomas Hoccleve's Self-Publication and Book Production**

David Watt

Thomas Hoccleve made at least five books containing his own poetry in addition to a large *Formulary* that preserves models for Privy Seal documents.<sup>1</sup> He was involved in the production of one manuscript containing a copy of John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* in Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.2, where his hand appeared alongside those of a number of other important London scribes.<sup>2</sup> This involvement connects him with the commercial dissemination of the *Confessio*<sup>3</sup> and places him provocatively close to the community of artisans who compiled and produced the Ellesmere and Hengwrt collections of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.<sup>4</sup> It consolidates the argument that he had an influence on the production of at least two presentation copies of his *Regiment of Princes*: London, British Library MSS Arundel 38 and Harley 4866. Cumulatively, Hoccleve's manuscript legacy shows his profound interest in making his own books and in the methods by which other books were made.<sup>5</sup> As a writer who compiled manuscripts containing his own poems and a scribe who helped disseminate the work of others, Hoccleve had first-hand awareness of the challenges and opportunities presented by the material book.

In all of his books, only one poem appears twice in Hoccleve's own hand.<sup>6</sup> In San Marino, Huntington Library, MS HM 744, 'Learn to Die' concludes a compilation of religious poems; in Durham, University Library MS Cosin V.iii.9, the same poem forms part of the *Series*.<sup>7</sup> Whereas both manuscripts are compilations, MS Cosin V.iii.9 subordinates its collection of linked poems to a framing conversation that describes how a narrator named Thomas Hoccleve selects its items for inclusion. This frame contributes to a sophisticated text that, in John Burrow's words, 'not only describes the making of a book, but also *is* that

book.<sup>8</sup> The inclusion of 'Learn to Die' in the *Series* cannot be read as a straightforward account of his production of the Huntington holograph since at least part of it had been written before MS HM 744 was complete.<sup>9</sup> But by demonstrating some of the production methods available to him, Hoccleve's inclusion of 'Learn to Die' in the Huntington manuscript provides a useful context for the way that he later turns the experience of making a book into a framing narrative. The *Series* dramatises its narrator's attempt to overcome the challenges presented by material book production. He employs techniques developed by commercial scribes to deal with a scarcity of resources and limited access to exemplars — solutions that shaped the way books were produced in early-fifteenth-century London. The appearance of 'Learn to Die' in two manuscript contexts shows how the book's material form determines not only what kind of compilation methods can be employed, but also what type of composition can be imagined.

### 1. 'Learn to Die' and San Marino, Huntington Library MS HM 744

MS HM 744 closes with two quires of 'Learn to Die,' which ends incomplete at line 672.<sup>10</sup> Because of the textual loss, it is impossible to say whether it was originally the last text in the book. It is also uncertain whether it contained all four parts of the treatise or, like the version in the *Series*, broke off after the first.<sup>11</sup> What can be discerned is that 'Learn to Die' appears at the beginning of a booklet produced — and perhaps even circulated — independently of the other booklets that make up this composite manuscript.<sup>12</sup> It therefore demonstrates one of the most important techniques that commercial scribes used to counter the constraints imposed by the limited availability of time and exemplars. Booklet production uses the flexibility of the physical book to mitigate the economic risks associated with investing resources in the production of a large manuscript over a long period of time.

In this respect, P. R. Robinson argues that the booklet should be considered alongside quires and *pecia* as a term describing the basic units of manuscript production. Quires are the building blocks of any book. *Pecia* describes a system whereby stationers met the urgent demand for texts at medieval universities by supplying individual quires or *peciae* from larger exemplars for scholars (or scribes employed by them) to copy one at a time.<sup>13</sup> *Peciae* are portions of larger texts divided arbitrarily by quire division.<sup>14</sup>

Booklets, in contrast, come in varying shapes, some consisting of one quire and others of many gatherings.<sup>15</sup> Their distinguishing feature, in Robinson's estimation, is their self-sufficiency.<sup>16</sup> Ralph Hanna modifies this definition by emphasizing the importance of their 'separately conceived production.'<sup>17</sup> In order to use exemplars efficiently, both *pecia* and booklet production take advantage of the fact that any book is comprised of quires or gatherings that can be bound together or circulated separately. However, a booklet's written content is intimately linked with the length of a quire or series of gatherings, allowing it to be used independently or in a variety of manuscript contexts.

In its current state, MS HM 744 reveals that booklets can be distinguished based on two perspectives that Hanna identifies. From the owner's perspective, a booklet is a found object that can be joined with others in a composite manuscript by the purchaser. From the producer's perspective, a booklet is produced as an object in itself, 'and perhaps one intended to be joined with other booklets in the same or similar format.'<sup>18</sup> First, MS HM 744 is comprised of two booklets that reflect the interests of a later owner, probably a member of the Fyler family,<sup>19</sup> who bound two quires of didactic material with six quires of Hoccleve's poems at some time during the fifteenth century.<sup>20</sup> Quire 2 ends with its last item incomplete, indicating that the current third quire did not initially follow it. Hoccleve's poems, written in his distinctive secretary hand, commence in Quire 3 and fill the rest of the codex.<sup>21</sup> Hanna's revision of Robinson allows us to consider these two quires as a booklet. Although it is not evidently self-sufficient due to its textual loss, nevertheless its production was clearly conceived separately from Hoccleve's part of the manuscript. Second, Hoccleve's portion of HM MS 744 (Quires 3-8) shows evidence of having been *produced* as three separate booklets:<sup>22</sup>

Booklet I (Quire 3, fols 25<sup>r</sup> -32<sup>v</sup>):

- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. fols 25 <sup>r</sup> -28 <sup>r</sup> | <i>Inuocacio ad patrem</i> |
| 2. fols 28 <sup>r</sup> -30 <sup>r</sup> | <i>Ad filium</i>           |
| 3. fols 30 <sup>r</sup> -31 <sup>v</sup> | <i>Ad spiritum sanctum</i> |
| 4. fols 31 <sup>v</sup> -32 <sup>v</sup> | <i>Ad beatam virginem</i>  |

Booklet II (Quires 4-6, fols. 33<sup>r</sup>-52<sup>v</sup>)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 5. fols 33 <sup>r</sup> -36 <sup>r</sup> | <i>Item de beata virgine</i>                  |
| 6. fols 36 <sup>r</sup> -36 <sup>v</sup> | <i>Item de beata virgine</i>                  |
| 7. fols 36 <sup>v</sup> -39 <sup>r</sup> | <i>Explicit prologus &amp; incipit fabula</i> |

8. fols 39 <sup>v</sup> -50 <sup>v</sup>	<i>Lepistre de Cupide</i>
9. fols 50 <sup>v</sup> -51 <sup>v</sup>	[Balade to King Henry V]
10. fols 51 <sup>v</sup> -52 <sup>v</sup>	[Three Roundels]

Booklet III (Quires 7-8, fols 53<sup>r</sup>-68<sup>v</sup>)

11. fols 53 <sup>r</sup> -68 <sup>v</sup>	<i>Hic incipit ars vtilissima sciendi mori</i>
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Each item is introduced by a heading; all except 9 and 10 are introduced by a blue capital over red flourishing in ink.

Hoccleve's first booklet is a one-quire unit. All four poems in it are linked thematically as invocations to the Trinity and the Virgin. The parallel construction of the headings makes this connection explicit insofar as the '*Inuocatio*' that opens this quire '*ad patrem*' is distributed among the remaining headings: '*ad filium*,' '*ad spiritum sanctum*,' and '*ad beatam virginem*.' Although it could be a coincidence that the last of these poems ends with the quire, Hoccleve's spacing of the texts in Quire 3 suggests otherwise. He skips a stanza at the bottom of fol. 28<sup>r</sup> (between Items 1 and 2) in order to accommodate a new poem to start Quire 4. This ensures that Item 4 ends at the bottom of fol. 32<sup>v</sup>, giving the impression that it runs seamlessly into Item 5 across the quire break. Physical variation between the two quires tells against this impression of continuity by indicating that they make use of differing materials and may have been produced at different times. At the fore-edge, the 2-mm size difference between these quires is the most striking in the book. Even when the codex is closed, one can discern the break between these two quires. Self-contained in one quire, the first booklet offers maximum flexibility: it could have been used to open any number of compilation manuscripts or circulated on its own.<sup>23</sup>

Whereas its thematic focus and unified presentation characterise the first booklet, the second and third can be discerned through the presence of two poems that disrupt the manuscript's apparent unity in order to fill physical space in the sixth quire. The second booklet is a three-quire collection containing two Marian pieces (Item 6 serves as a prologue to Item 7) followed by Hoccleve's translation of Christine de Pizan's *Letter of Cupid*, which includes much added Marian material.<sup>24</sup> Two short pieces, Items 9 and 10, close Quire 6.<sup>25</sup> The first of these is a Ballad to King Henry V, made upon his last (or latest) return from France.<sup>26</sup> Its seven-line stanzas and tone make it relatively consistent with the other poems in the manuscript, other than in its topicality. The second of these items contains Three Roundels ('trois chaunceons') that differ from the remainder of MS HM 744

in tone, form, and *mis-en-page*. These roundels offer a personal side to Hoccleve's writing, more reminiscent of his autobiographical texts than the other poems in this manuscript.<sup>27</sup> Both poems have *litterae notabiliores* in the author's own hand instead of the illuminated capitals standard in the rest of the manuscript, and neither spaces nor guide letters for capitals appear. The presence of these two poems at the end of the only four-leaf quire in the manuscript indicates that they were likely included as a way of closing a unit, either a booklet or a codex. In addition to the incongruous material that appears at the end of the shortened sixth quire, a couplet written over an erasure in the manuscript draws attention to the awkward juxtaposition of the three roundels with 'Learn to Die':

After our song / our mirthe & our gladnesse  
Heer folwith a lessoun of heuynesse. (MS HM 744, fol. 52<sup>v</sup>)

Hoccleve seems uncomfortable about the transition between the second and third booklets, and he attempts to mitigate its inappropriateness. Yet the couplet merely emphasises the fact that 'Learn to Die' would have been more effectively placed immediately following *Lepistre*.

Although the erasure at the end of Quire 6 means that any theory about the inclusion of 'Learn to Die' must remain speculative, I propose two rival hypotheses that take this information into account while pointing to the independent existence of the booklet containing this text.<sup>28</sup> The first hypothesis assumes that the writing under the erasure merely represents an earlier, unsuccessful attempt at a transition. Anticipating an ongoing copying project, Hoccleve concludes *Lepistre* at the beginning of an eight-leaf quire. He then decides to incorporate an already-completed booklet containing 'Learn to Die' into this manuscript. Consequently, he needs to fill Quire 6's remaining space in order to accommodate the fact that 'Learn to Die' begins on a new quire. He shortens Quire 6 by removing its inner two bifolia, leaving blank only the two leaves conjugate with the conclusion of *Lepistre*.<sup>29</sup> To fill this space, he uses two short poems (Items 9 and 10). Had 'Learn to Die' not existed as a separate booklet, Hoccleve could have copied it directly into the manuscript immediately following *Lepistre*, thereby avoiding the awkward transitional couplet. He would have had no reason to truncate Quire 6 or to find two poems of the right length — but of incongruous thematic content — to fill the space remaining at the end of this quire. The second hypothesis assumes that the writing under the erasure originally concluded a foreshortened version of the manuscript. In this scenario, Hoccleve

completes Quire 6 in the same manner as suggested above, although instead of accommodating another booklet, he merely intends to finish his book. He then has to erase whatever he had written to conclude his collection in order to add the couplet linking 'Learn to Die' to the rest of the manuscript.

Our inability to confirm which hypothesis is more likely shows the advantage of employing booklets. When used effectively, their boundaries can be difficult to discern. They therefore offer compilers the flexibility to delay decisions about including texts until the very last minute. For Hanna, this is their distinguishing feature. It forms the basis of his critique of Robinson's conception of self-sufficiency, which he argues 'tends to overlook that feature which...most basically distinguishes the booklet from other forms of production, the postponement of any overall plan for a finished book, in some cases until after production has ceased.'<sup>30</sup> The fundamental importance of the booklet is that it uses the book's physical flexibility to adapt it to changing circumstances, which is precisely how Hoccleve uses the technique in MS HM 744.<sup>31</sup> Although catchwords in Hoccleve's hand show that he intended these three booklets to be joined together, the book's form suggests that this decision was made at a late stage of production; significant soiling on the outer bifolium of each quire indicates that they were left unbound for some time. Hoccleve's inclusion of 'Learn to Die' in the Huntington manuscript demonstrates his familiarity with the kind of production Hanna describes — a method that employs the physical flexibility of the manuscript to delay indefinitely the plan for a finished book.

## 2. 'Learn to Die' and the 'Making' of the *Series*

Hoccleve frames his inclusion of 'Learn to Die' in the *Series* as if it relies on booklet production to defer the book's final form for as long as possible.<sup>32</sup> In his dramatisation of the compilation process, Hoccleve creates a narrator who needs to overcome limited resources. It takes him time to acquire and copy exemplars. The *Series* defies aesthetic conventions by representing the passing of time not in terms of the reader's experience of the text, but in terms of its production. Its narrator is subject to the same constraints as his counterparts in London's commercial trade, and the framing narrative measures and reveals the time it takes for him to make his book. In a 35-line prologue to the 'Complaint,' the *Series* begins as an apparently conventional dream vision, opening on a night in the 'broune season of Mihelmesse' and implying that the text that follows is written

during the next morning.<sup>33</sup> Ending his prologue, the narrator claims that, 'I brast out / on þe morwe / and þus began' (C 35).<sup>34</sup> At this point, the pace of composition ostensibly moves at the same speed as our reading.<sup>35</sup> This impression is first troubled near the end of the 'Complaint,' when the narrator recounts how he found consolation in a book in which Reason gives 'wordes of consolacioun' (C 311) to a 'woful man' (C 310). Recognizing a parallel between this man's situation and his own, the narrator uses the book until its lender unexpectedly reclaims it:

Lenger I thoghte / red haue in this book  
But so it shoop / þat I ne mighte naght;  
He þat it oghte / ageyn it to him took,  
Me of his haast vnwaar. (C 372-375)

Latin glosses accompany the section from lines 310-358, implying that the narrator does not only read this text, but copies from it as well. The glosses are so thorough that A. G. Rigg uses them to identify the book that Hoccleve 'sees' as Isidore of Seville's *Synonyma*.<sup>36</sup> John Burrow supplements Rigg's article by pointing out that the source for the *Series* is not the complete *Synonyma*, but rather an epitome like that found in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 110, which supplies all the material included in the 'Complaint.'<sup>37</sup> Burrow's careful study concludes that the narrator's loss of exemplar is merely a 'convenient fiction'<sup>38</sup> — a reminder that the *Series* does not provide straightforward information about its author's access to texts. This scene does not recount Hoccleve's experience of copying this book, but dramatises the kind of material constraints he might have faced. The lender's haste highlights the relationship between time and access to exemplars: a compiler needs access to his materials for long enough to carry out the mechanical task of copying.

This first temporal rupture might reasonably be read as a recollection of a past event subordinated to the narrative present. By introducing the *Synonyma* with the words, 'This othir day / a lamentacioun / Of a woful man / in a book I sy' (C 309-31), Hoccleve implies that the narrator saw and copied this text earlier, and now transfers it into his 'Complaint.' No other markers indicate the passing of time in the 'Complaint,' which seems to end when a friend arrives at the door and precipitates the 'Dialogue': 'And, endid my conpleynte / in this maneere, / Oon knokkid / at my chambre dore sore' (D 1-2). At this point, the time of the reader and the narrator diverge. Hoccleve immediately reads his poem to the friend: 'And



right anoon / I redde him my conpleynte' (*D* 17), condensing into one line the time it has taken for the reader to progress through the text so far. After this, the apparently natural pattern of narrative time resumes, and the 'Dialogue' proceeds by recording the discussion between the two friends for several hundred lines. Then, at lines 659-662, the passing of a 'long tyme' is again compressed into a single line:

He a long tyme in a studie stood,  
And aftir þat thus tolde he his entente:  
'Thomas, sauf bettre auys, I holde it good,  
Syn now the holy seson is of Lente...' (*D* 659-662)

The 'Complaint' opens in Michaelmas and, in terms of its internal narrative, seems to be completed during a single morning. The arrival of the narrator's friend follows immediately upon this completion. Thus the friend stands in 'studie' for a *long* time. If the season is now Lent, he's been thinking for five months!<sup>39</sup>

Jacques Le Goff's distinction between Merchant's time and Church's time offers two different ways of reading the shift from Michaelmas to Lent. Le Goff argues that Merchant's time enabled productivity to be measured.<sup>40</sup> In opposition to Merchant's time, 'the Church sets up its own time, which is supposed to belong to God alone and which cannot be an object of lucre.'<sup>41</sup> Church's time could not be mortgaged or measured: it was experienced in relation to God's eternity.<sup>42</sup> In terms of Church's time, both Michaelmas and Lent fit with the portion of the poem in which they are used as the setting. Michaelmas establishes the melancholy mood of the 'Complaint'; Lent suits the penitential tone of contrition that follows. The holy seasons can coexist in Church's time because they are always present in relation to eternity. On the other hand, as a scribe, compiler, and author, Hoccleve's narrator functions within the realm of Merchant's time, which can be exchanged for profit. By acknowledging the amount of time it takes to compose, write, and compile a text, the jump from Michaelmas to Lent signifies the lengthy process of 'making'.<sup>43</sup>

Scribes involved in commercial book production needed to make efficient use of their time in order to survive, let alone profit. They had to develop techniques to produce a variety of texts without the institutional support of a monastic or university community. Theirs was a bespoke trade, where tying up capital in the long-term production of large books could pose a serious economic risk.<sup>44</sup> The artisans with whom Hoccleve was acquainted developed at least two

ways to reduce the amount of time from commission to the production of text, as well as to reduce the risk associated with producing texts 'on spec.' To meet the demands of producing large manuscripts, such as the *Confessio Amantis*, they distributed exemplars for different parts of a single text to be copied simultaneously by multiple scribes and rejoined as seamlessly as possible.<sup>45</sup> In contrast, booklet production allowed compilation manuscripts to be produced without such extensive organization. As we have seen in the example of MS HM 744, a stationer could conjoin booklets produced at different times and based on different exemplars in order to draw together a book quickly at the final stage of production. By shifting the seasons at line 662 of the 'Dialogue,' the narrator insists on the time and physical effort it has taken him to produce his book in commercial terms. It simply takes him a long time. He may have begun his 'Complaint' in November, but it is not until April that he can possibly have produced a complete text to read to the friend. While the 'Complaint' may be set in Michaelmas — and may have even been begun on that bleak November morning — Hoccleve dismantles the fiction that his narrator can create a poem in a single day.<sup>46</sup>

In its place, the *Series* offers a narrative where the inclusion of 'Learn to Die' gives the impression that its narrator employs booklet production to defer making decisions about his book's final form in order to make the most of the time available to him. Whereas this poem is an independent booklet joined with other texts at a late stage in the production of MS HM 744, the narrator in the *Series* insists it is the first part of the book to be conceived. When the friend first arrives at the door and hears the newly completed 'Complaint,' he asks whether the narrator intends to produce anything else:

Whan thy conpleynte / was to thende ybrought,  
Cam it aght in thy purpos / and thy thought  
Aght elles therwith / to han maad than that? (D 200-202)

The narrator responds in the affirmative:

Frende, þat I shal yow telle / as blyue ywis.  
In Latyn haue I seen / a smal tretice  
Whiche Lerne for to Die / callid is...  
And þat haue I / purposid to translate... (D 204-6, 211)

The friend's question is ambiguous, as is the narrator's answer. At first, it is unclear whether the narrator will follow the 'Complaint' by 'making' another text in the same manuscript or another text later in time (but in a different manuscript).<sup>47</sup>

The narrator's motivation for producing 'Learn to Die' is also ambiguous. Initially he claims that he hopes this work will serve partly as a purgation of his 'bodyes gilte / foul and vnclene' (D 215):

To clense it / sumwhat by translacioun  
Of it shal be / myn occupacioun. (D 216-17)

In contrast to the idea that time can be measured and exchanged, the narrator's inclusion of 'Learn to Die' serves as a reminder that time must also be used to prepare the soul for salvation. The narrator hopes that his text will cleanse his own sins, but also that others might read it and recognise their need for absolution:

Man may in this tretice / heere afterward,  
If þat him lyke / reden and beholde,  
Considere and see wel / þat it is ful hard  
Delaye acountes / til lyf gynne colde.  
Short tyme is thanne / of his offenses olde  
To make a iust / and treewe rekenynge. (D 225-230)

He notes that he has little life remaining, implying that his translation of this text is an attempt to make the best use of his own limited time on earth.<sup>48</sup> This motivation highlights the importance of non-commercial time. Ethan Knapp argues that Hoccleve links writing to the process of ageing in the prologue to the *Regiment of Princes*, where the physical demands placed on the scribe eventually lead to mortality.<sup>49</sup> The *Series*'s narrator likewise expresses his anxiety about the physical demands of writing over time, straining to complete the text before becoming incapacitated through illness, old age, or death; yet the very act of writing threatens to precipitate all three, as both he and his friend recognise.

The narrator then returns to a seemingly commercial or at least pecuniary motivation when he claims to have been moved to translate his text 'at thexcitynge / and monicioun / Of a deuout man' (D 234-235). Whether this devout man signifies a real patron or is merely representative, his presence in the narrative

depicts the importance of such figures in the production and exchange of books.<sup>50</sup> Where patronage is lacking or uncertain it can be dangerous to invest capital in the material for books and the time it takes to produce them; if no devout man or woman purchases the book or rewards its maker, money could become scarce. As the *Series* progresses and the narrator attempts to produce a text that will both purge his sins and please a patron, he reveals that he already has one in mind. It is this patronage that compels him to make his book. The friend realises that the narrator is keen to publish this book primarily because he owes one to Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester:

And of o thyng / now wel I me remembre,  
Why thow purposist in this book trauaille.  
I trowe þat in the monthe of Septembre...  
Thow seidist / of a book thow were in dette  
Vnto my lord / þat now is lieutenant,  
My lord of Gloucestre / is it nat so? (D 526-29; 532-34)

The narrator replies that this is true, and that Humphrey should have had his book a long time ago, were it not for the narrator's afflicted state:

Yis soothly, freend / and as by couenant  
He sholde han had it many a day ago;  
But seeknesse and vnlust / and othir mo  
Han be the causes of impediment. (D 535-538)

By linking the causes of impediment with the production of this book, the narrator shows that the 'Complaint' is an appropriate prologue to 'Learn to Die'; it justifies the narrator's belated completion of this text for Humphrey while introducing the relevant themes of community, mutability, and mortality. It shows the narrator's dedication to the Duke by highlighting his resolution to complete 'Learn to Die' in the face of adversity. Putting the pieces of the puzzle together, the friend asks, 'Thomas / than this book haast thow to him ment?' (D 539).<sup>51</sup>

The friend's apparent confusion about this book's intended patron is less surprising when we consider that the narrator earlier speaks of a 'devout man' who was the initiator of this project. Did he mean Humphrey? John Thompson thinks not. He argues that this scene exemplifies the demands of completing multiple commissions: in the *Series*, according to Thompson, Hoccleve reveals his anxiety

about completing both this text and MS HM 744.<sup>52</sup> Although Hoccleve frames 'Learn to Die' differently in these two manuscripts, perhaps even in order to please two patrons, it does not necessarily follow that he would describe this activity in the *Series*. Nor does the *Series* give any reason to doubt that Humphrey is the 'devout man' within the terms of its narrative. The narrator claims that he put everything else aside in order to concentrate on the writing of this text when he heard of Humphrey's recent arrival home from France. He recognises that he cannot write a book in a single morning, so he immediately sets to work on his commission. He claims that we would have preferred to have written something much more cheerful, or 'many a balade' (*D* 551). Based on the evidence provided by San Marino, Huntington Library, MS HM 111 and a missing holograph dedicated to the Duke of York, Hoccleve considered such a collection suitable for important patrons on other occasions. He then contemplates a translation of Vegetius's *De re militari*, but settles on 'Learn to Die,' perhaps because it was a text that Humphrey had requested or would want to be seen to request. His staging of these demands need not rely upon competing commissions. In fact, the lack of an advance commission may account for the manner in which 'Learn to Die' appears in MS HM 744. There, it shows that Hoccleve could tailor the book for a particular reader at the last minute. Its inclusion in the *Series* inverts the manner in which it appears in the Huntington manuscript, and it is the poems around 'Learn to Die' that become part of the book's plan at a late stage. Hoccleve's narrator confirms that this book — the one initially intended to include the 'Complaint' and 'Learn to Die' — is the one that he intends for Humphrey: 'For him it is / þat I this book shal make' (*D* 541). He then uses booklet production to select other texts for inclusion in this manuscript based on the particular circumstances of the commission. And the narrative insists these deliberations continue until the very last stages of this book's production.

The narrator's assertion that he 'this book shal make' yokes the physical and intellectual labour required to produce a book. Like Hoccleve, the narrator becomes a maker in terms of both abstract composition and material production. Recognizing that this process takes time, the friend offers to oversee this book's ongoing production before leaving at the end of the 'Dialogue':

Among, I thynke thee for to visyte  
Or þat thy book fully finisshid be,  
For looth me were / thow sholdest aght wryte  
Wherthurgh / thow mightest gete any maugree,

And for þat cause / I wole it ouersee. (D 792-796)

The friend returns between each section of the *Series* to discuss the next stage of the book. Each of his visits instigates the inclusion of more text, and he emphasises the book's material production by physically supplying the narrator with the moralization to the 'Tale of Jereslaus's Wife,' which appears prior to 'Learn to Die,' and the 'Tale of Jonathas' along with its moralization, which follows it. Ethan Knapp argues that this structuring relationship between the friend and the narrator reveals a 'collaborative labor and textual compilation' that 'is in fact a projection of the labor in the Privy Seal into the world of poetic composition.'<sup>53</sup> I agree that Hoccleve's vocation profoundly shaped the *Series*. But underlying this aspect of the collaboration between the narrator and his friend is a profound knowledge of the way that books were being produced in London's commercial trade.

It is in terms of these commercial practices that the *Series* both describes and enacts its own making. Although the narrator initially intends to include 'Learn to Die' following the 'Dialogue,' the friend convinces him to expand the book's scope by including a tale from the *Gesta Romanorum* to appease women. With the friend's departure at the end of the 'Dialogue,' the narrator voices his hope that he will be seen as women's friend through writing (D 810-12). He states that what will follow will be, 'A tale eek / which I in the Romayn Deedis / Now late sy (D 820-21). As with 'Learn to Die,' through which he seeks purgation for earthly sins, he hopes to cleanse himself of 'guilt' towards women by including this tale: 'and þat shal purge, I hope, / My gilt / as cleene / as keuerchiefs dooth sope' (D 825-26). He then includes a translation of the tale, closing by noting that the emperor and his wife live in joy and honour until their deaths,

Which þat no wight eschue may, ne flee:

And whan God list, also dye shul we.

(*Fabula...imperatrice Romana* 951-52)<sup>54</sup>

These lines seem particularly appropriate as the reader expects the already belated 'Learn to Die' to follow them. Instead, the friend returns, fulfilling his promise to 'oversee' the book:

My freend, aftir, I trowe, a wike or two

That this tale endid was, hoom to me cam,

And seide, 'Thomas, hastow almoost do?  
To see thy werk, hidir comen Y am.'  
(*Fabula...imperatrice Romana* 953-56)

The narrator fetches the tale, and gives it to the friend, who 'it nam / Into his hand and it al ouersy' (957-58). He asks whether the narrator intends to say anything more in the tale, to which the answer is no. The friend claims that there is much missing:

Thomas, heer is a greet substance aweye.  
Wher is the moralizynge, Y yow preye,  
Bycome heerof? Was ther noon in the book  
Out of which þat thow this tale took?  
(*Fabula...imperatrice Romana* 963-66).

The narrator tells the friend that there was no moralization in his exemplar, at which the friend expresses his surprise. He then sets off for home to get his own copy:

Hoom wole Y walke and retourne anoon...  
And looke in my book. Ther Y shal nat faille  
To fynde it. Of þat tale it is parcel,  
For Y seen haue it ofte, and knowe it wel.  
(*Fabula...imperatrice Romana* 969; 971-73)

His assertion that the moralization is 'parcel' of the Tale reflects the type of compilations that he is used to reading.<sup>55</sup> His possession of such a compilation indicates that he is someone with access to books and who understands how books are made. When the friend returns with the exemplar, he reads it to the narrator, leaves it with him, and departs. In order to avoid having his copying cut short again, the narrator gets right down to work:

And to this moralizynge I me spedde,  
In prose wrytynge it hoomly and pleyn...  
(*Fabula...imperatrice Romana* 976-77)

His urgency recognises the material reality of scarce exemplars, and recalls the moment in the 'Complaint' when the narrator lost his copy of the *Synonyma* because its owner requested it to be returned earlier than expected.

His inclusion of this tale and its moralization relies upon the narrator's use of production techniques apparent in MS HM 744. Hoccleve first points to the use of booklets when his narrator hands a single tale to his friend (*Fabula...imperatrice Romana* 957): it is not yet part of a whole book. Second, upon reading the tale and finding that the moralization is not present in one version of the text, the friend provides another in which it is. The use of different exemplars to complete parts of a single text is, for Hanna, a distinguishing aspect of booklet production.<sup>56</sup> Most importantly, the narrator's description of a time delay between his completion of 'Jereslaus's Wife' and the inclusion of the moralization reveals that its physical incorporation also relies upon this technique. The friend does not arrive to oversee the book until 'a wike or two' (*Fabula...imperatrice Romana* 953) after the narrator had completed the 'Tale of Jereslaus's Wife,' which immediately precedes 'Learn to Die' in the manuscript. The narrative that describes the production of 'Learn to Die' in the *Series*'s frame mirrors the method Hoccleve actually uses in his inclusion of it in MS HM 744. In the time between the completion of 'Jereslaus's Wife' and the arrival of the moralization, the narrator does not copy 'Learn to Die' on leaves conjugate to 'Jereslaus's Wife.' Instead, 'Learn to Die' exists as a separate booklet, which may well have been complete already. The 'wike or two' between the copying of the Tale and its exemplar emphasises the fact that books are made over time, and that scribes developed ways to maximise the use of this time by using the physical flexibility of books to their advantage.

'Learn to Die' finally appears at this point. Given the extent of the narrative devoted to introducing this text, it is something of an anticlimax that the narrator only translates one of the four parts that he outlines, conceding that a complete translation is beyond him:

The othir iii partes which in this book  
Of the tretice of deeth expressid be,  
Touche Y nat dar. þat labour Y forsook...  
(*Ars vtilissima sciendi mori* 918-920)<sup>57</sup>



Perhaps responding to the friend's fear that his illness will recur because of too much mental labour, the narrator gives up the task of translating. In place of the missing three parts, he offers a short prose piece on the 'Joys of Heaven,' the ninth lesson read on 'All halwen day' (*Ars* 926). This appears to be an appropriate ending for the *Series*. In terms of Church's time, the compilation has come full circle, from the opening November morning in Michaelmas, through Lent, to All Saints Day.<sup>58</sup>

Despite the narrator's intentions, the *Series* does not end here. The friend, ignoring his own admonitions that the narrator should limit his exertion, convinces him to 'make' yet another tale:

This book thus to han endid had Y thoght,  
But my freend made me change my cast.  
Cleene out of þat purpos hath he me broght.  
'Thomas,' he seide, 'at Estren þat was last,  
I redde a tale, which Y am agast  
To preye thee, for the laboures sake  
That thou haast had, for to translate and make,  
And yit ful fayn wolde Y þat it maad wer...'  
(*Fabula ad instanciam amici* 1-8)<sup>59</sup>

The narrator feels obligated to fulfil his friend's request: 'Freend, looth me wer nayseye vnto yow...' (*Fabula ad instanciam amici* 36). He dutifully agrees to include the text, 'making' it both as its translator and compiler. Hearing the narrator's consent, the friend expresses his satisfaction and supplies yet another exemplar, this time the tale with its moralization implicitly included:

He glad was therwithal, and wel content.  
The copie on the morwe sente he me;  
And thus Y wroot as yee may heer see.  
(*Fabula ad instanciam amici* 82-84)

The inclusion of this final text parallels the second hypothesis that I posited earlier for the presence of 'Learn to Die' in MS HM 744. That is to say, it is added to the end of an ostensibly finished manuscript, drawing attention to the open-ended construction of both the manuscript and the text as a whole.

### 3. Compilation as Narrative

The realism with which Hoccleve represents his narrator's production of the book often leads readers to assume that he straightforwardly narrates his own activities in producing this particular codex. For example, A. G. Rigg identifies the *Synonyma* as the text read and copied directly by Hoccleve himself. No extant manuscript, including the Durham holograph, supports such an interpretation.<sup>60</sup> Yet because the author and narrator operate in the same temporal plane, it is difficult to avoid conflating them. By using the pronoun 'I' to describe the making of 'this book,' as in the title of this paper and the passage cited above, the text encourages this conflation: 'And thus Y wroot as yee may heer see' (*Fabula ad instanciam amici* 84). The collapse of distinction between narrator and author becomes especially acute in the case of MS Cosin V.iii.9, where Hoccleve the author literally wrote what we see there. Hoccleve uses this conflation to his advantage. By producing a compilation that has 'Learn to Die' at its heart, both Hoccleve and his narrator seek to use time efficiently. On the one hand, the narrator believes this task will 'clense' (*D* 216) his soul, and Hoccleve might hope it will do the same for him. On the other hand, by producing a suitably devout text for patrons, Hoccleve hopes that the time he has spent making this text will be acknowledged and rewarded. Unlike other dream vision poets, Hoccleve does not use his narrator to efface the time required to make a text, but to emphasise it. By using a narrator who shares his name and writing the text in his own hand, he points up the fact that he is fills all four potential roles in the making of books that St Bonaventure identifies: Hoccleve is the author, commentator, compiler, and scribe.<sup>61</sup> By describing its own production, the *Series* makes a case for its maker's remuneration, and a conflation between scribe and author may prove advantageous.

However, the *Series* does not describe its actual making. Burrow's assertion that an epitome of the *Synonyma* provides the text in the 'Complaint' reveals that the narrator's access to texts does not mirror the author's. Later, the text itself indicates that the frame is a carefully planned fiction. After a lengthy debate about the narrator's ability to make a book and the friend's failure to live up to the ideals of friendship, it appears as though 'Learn to Die' will complete the book. However, the narrator second guesses his plans and turns to the friend for advice about what text he might include that would impress the Duke:

What thyng may I make vnto his plesance?  
Withouten your reed / noot I what to seye. (D 618-619)

The friend responds by pontificating on the importance of writing nothing to 'so noble a prince' (D 631) unless 'it be good mateere and vertuous' (D 637). He then advises the narrator to plan what will follow very carefully, as if he were building a house:

Thow woost wel / who shal an hous edifie  
Gooth nat therto withoute auisament  
If he be wys / for with his mental ye  
First is it seen / purposid / cast & ment,  
How it shal wroght been / elles al is shent.  
Certes / for the deffaute of good forsighte  
Mistyden thynges / pat wel tyde mighte. (C 638-644)

A Latin gloss accompanies the text: '¶ Si quis habet fundare domum, non currit ad actum. ¶ Impetuosa manus etc.' (D 638).<sup>62</sup> The gloss cites lines 43-44 of Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria Nova*, revealing that the friend draws his metaphor from the very highest authority in matters of composition. The friend continues to follow the *Poetria* in his assertion that the metaphor of house building applies to poetic writing:

This may been vnto thee / in thy makynge  
A good mirour / Thow wilt nat haaste, I trowe,  
Vnto thy penne / and therwith wirke heedlynge  
Or thow auysed be wel / and wel knowe  
What thow shalt wryte. (D 645-49)

The friend iterates Geoffrey of Vinsauf's distinction between the stages of mentally imagining a poem in its entirety and physically writing it. One should rush to use one's hand to produce neither buildings nor texts. In both cases, an overall plan should be established before material production begins. Although Geoffrey of Vinsauf has poetic composition in mind, the friend sees a parallel between this and the production of compilation manuscripts. He implies that one

should likewise plan an entire manuscript before performing the physical labour of attaining and copying exemplars. He cautions that only in this way can the narrator assure himself that 'no thyng shal out from him breke / Hastily ne of rakil negligence' (D 654-55), perhaps responding to the narrator's initial claim to have 'brast out' (C 35). In this concern, too, the friend acknowledges Geoffrey of Vinsauf, who cautions that one inept part can spoil the whole in the same way that little gall makes the honey bitter or a single blemish mars a whole face.

Ironically, the friend offers this advice while attempting to persuade the narrator to change his plans. Once the friend gets his way, the *Series* is not the book that the narrator had initially 'purposid, cast and ment' (D 641), which would have been comprised only of the 'Complaint' as a prologue to 'Learn to Die.' Instead, the friend insists on the collection of two tales from the *Gesta Romanorum*. By questioning the overall structure of the *Series* at every point of transition, the friend ensures that its compilation progresses in a manner anathema to Geoffrey of Vinsauf's admonition that one should build a poem as one would build a house. Instead of following a plan for the whole, the narrator defers any decision about the book's final form for as long as possible.

The appearance of the *Poetria Nova* militates against arguments that the narrator's compilation naively reproduces the author's work. It establishes a critical distance between the narrator and the author, suggesting that Hoccleve had planned the entire compilation in his mind's eye before writing it. The framing narration is a reflection on, not a mirror of, Hoccleve's own experience of compiling books. The *Series*'s frame is a fiction, but one rooted firmly in the material conditions of making books in fifteenth-century London. It therefore represents a new kind of text, which emphasises the fact that the vernacular maker does not merely compose texts, but also at times physically compiles units that emulate the book assembled in the mind.<sup>63</sup> The scribes with whom Hoccleve interacted produced and disseminated some of the most important contemporary vernacular texts, and their methods led to new ways of imagining how to organise such texts. Gower's *Confessio Amantis* employs the idea of compilation as a structure for his text. Although Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* survives in an indefinitely deferred form, its scribes nevertheless either recognised or imposed a compilation structure upon it, organizing its fragments and booklets into a meaningful whole.<sup>64</sup>

Innovative forms and techniques engender new narrative possibilities. The *Series* demonstrates how the material book conditions how composition can be conceived, providing a new model for self-representation.<sup>65</sup> Hoccleve

characterises his narrator through a compilation of texts that relies on its compiler for coherence both literally and figuratively: the narrator physically compiles the book and makes it meaningful. In his inclusion of the *Synonyma* — or its epitome — into his text, the narrator applies the 'lamentacioun / Of a woful man' (C 309-10) to his own situation, and simultaneously uses it as an exemplar for his text. Character and compilation were closely aligned, as the author of *The Book of Courtesy* recognises while advising his son to attend Hoccleve's examples in his *Regiment of Princes*:

Beholde Ocllyff in his translacion  
In goodly langage and sentence passing wyse  
Yevyng the prince suche exortacion  
As to his highnesse he coulde best devyse  
Of trouthe, peace, of mercy, and of iustice  
And odir vertuys [...]  
                                and berith wyttensesse  
His trefte entitlede 'of regyment'  
Compyled of most entier true content.<sup>66</sup>

The adviser's use of 'compyled' acknowledges that the *Regiment* incorporates ethical examples gathered from various *auctores*. This process of compilation and application also provides a model for the novice to pursue; only by compiling his own text will the 'lytle childe' (1) be able to 'stere and remove' (10) from vice and direct himself towards virtue. This process forms a model for how exemplary texts are incorporated as part of experience. But inclusion depends on access to appropriate material. If character depends upon *exemplaria* that have been read and assimilated, then it should be possible to interpret character by examining the texts to which one has access.<sup>67</sup> Hoccleve's *Series* offers readers the opportunity to witness how one man selects such texts according to his needs and circumstances. By dramatising the process by which the narrator negotiates between intentions and the practical limitations of time and access to exemplars, it becomes a book that represents its compiler. Hoccleve's profound involvement with London's book trade not only enabled him to self-publish; it gave him new ways of imagining how to publish a self.

NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Three of Hoccleve's books are extant: Durham, University Library MS Cosin V.iii.9 is a copy of the *Series*; San Marino, Huntington Library MSS HM 111 and HM 744 are poetic compilations. Two dedications anthologised in MS HM 111 provide evidence for the two non-extant holographs. The *Formulary* is preserved in London, British Library, MS Additional 24062. H. C. Schulz uses this manuscript to confirm the others as holographs. 'Thomas Hoccleve, Scribe', *Speculum*, 12 (1937), 71-81.

<sup>2</sup> A. I. Doyle and M. B. Parkes identify Hoccleve as Scribe E in this manuscript in their seminal article, 'The Production of Copies of the *Canterbury Tales* and the *Confessio Amantis* in the Early Fifteenth Century', in *Scribes, Scripts, and Readers* (London: Hambledon Press, 1991), pp. 201-248 (esp. pp. 220-223 and 236-237).

<sup>3</sup> Scribe D from Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.2 is found in six *Confessio* manuscripts in addition to the Trinity College book. Doyle and Parkes, p. 215.

<sup>4</sup> Scribe B from Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.2 copied both of these manuscripts. See Doyle and Parkes; Paul Christianson, 'A Community of Book Artisans in Chaucer's London', *Viator*, 20 (1989), 207-18; and John Thompson, 'A Poet's Contacts with the Great and the Good: Further Consideration of Thomas Hoccleve's Texts and Manuscripts', in *Prestige, Authority and Power in Late Medieval Manuscripts and Texts*, ed. by Felicity Riddy (Cambridge: Brewer, 2000), pp. 77-101 (p. 95).

<sup>5</sup> A. S. G. Edwards and Derek Pearsall argue that, 'Thomas Hoccleve also seems to have acted as his own publisher, circulating his own copies of his works and possibly also enlisting his colleagues at the Privy Seal to assist in making copies, just as he helped out with the copying of a Gower manuscript.' 'The Manuscripts of the Major English Poetic Texts', in *Book Production and Publishing in Britain, 1375-1475*, ed. by Jeremy Griffiths and Derek Pearsall, Cambridge Studies in Publishing and Printing History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 257-278 (p. 259). They probably base this claim on Furnivall's belief that the three verse manuscripts were the work of Hoccleve's clerk, 'John Welde, or some like man.' F. J. Furnivall, ed., *Hoccleve's Works: The Minor Poems*, EETS, e.s. 61, rev. ed. by J. Mitchell

and A. I. Doyle, bound with EETS, e.s. 73 (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. xlix. The autograph status of these manuscripts eliminates hard evidence for Hoccleve's employment of Privy Seal clerks for copying, although it remains an intriguing possibility.

<sup>6</sup> The present article does not discuss the textual ramifications of this duplication. For such a study, see John Bowers, 'Hoccleve's Two Copies of 'Lerne to Dye': Implications for Textual Critics', *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 83 (1989), 437-72.

<sup>7</sup> By using the *Series*, I follow the now accepted title ascribed to these linked poems by E. P. Hammond in *English Verse between Chaucer and Surrey* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1927). The text also appears in the following non-holograph manuscripts: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MSS Selden Supra 53, Bodley 221, and Laud Misc. 735; Coventry, City Record Office, MS Acc. 325/1, and New Haven, Conn., Yale University, Beinecke Library, MS 493. For descriptions, see J. A. Burrow, ed. *Thomas Hoccleve's Complaint and Dialogue*, EETS o.s. 313 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. x-xvii.

<sup>8</sup> John Burrow, 'Hoccleve's *Series*: Experience and Books', in *Fifteenth-Century Studies: Recent Essays*, ed. by R. F. Yeager (Hamden: Archon Books, 1984), pp. 259-74 (p. 266).

<sup>9</sup> King Henry V's death on 31 August 1422 provides a *terminus ante quem* for the completion of MS HM 744 since the tag, 'que dieu pardoynt,' accompanies a heading that refers to King Henry V (MS HM 744, fol. 50v). Hoccleve's insertion of a revision in the text of the 'Dialogue' shows that at least part of the *Series* was written prior to 1421:

Whan I this wroot / many men dide amis,  
They weyed gold, vnhad auctoritee;  
No statut maad was thanne / as now is. (*D* 134-136)

This stanza refers to a statute on counterfeit coins passed by Parliament 2 May, 1421. Using this and other internal evidence, Burrow dates Hoccleve's work on the *Series* to between the end of 1419 and 1421. *Complaint and Dialogue*, pp. lvii-lx. The antecedent to 'this' is unclear in line 134: it could mean the entire *Series*, just the 'Complaint,' or the 'Complaint' and 'Dialogue.' However, at least part of the *Series* was written before Hoccleve completed the Huntington manuscript. For more on the statute see J. A. Burrow, 'Excursus III: Falsing of Coin, *Dialogue* 99-196', in *Complaint and Dialogue*, pp. 120-124. Elsewhere, he reads this an artistic blemish: 'Experience and Books', p. 263. For a discussion of this passage in the context of counterfeiting in Lancastrian England, see Paul Strohm, 'Counterfeiters, Lollards, and Lancastrian Unease', in *England's Empty Throne: Usurpation and the Language of Legitimation 1399-1422* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 141-148.

<sup>10</sup> In 'Hoccleve's Huntington Holographs: The First "Collected Poems" in English', *Fifteenth Century Studies*, 15 (1989), pp. 27-51, John Bowers argues that the loss at the end of MS HM 744 and the beginning of MS HM 111 may indicate that these two manuscripts were initially bound as one 'collected works.' In this he follows the tentative suggestion made by

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Doyle and Parkes, p. 182 n. 38. J. A. Burrow and A. I. Doyle articulate their scepticism about the unification of these manuscripts in their introduction to *Thomas Hoccleve: A Facsimile of the Autograph Verse Manuscripts*, EETS s.s. 19 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. xxvii. Although other evidence makes this claim unlikely, the flexibility of booklet production means that it cannot be ruled out. In this case, 'Learn to Die' would not be the last poem in the manuscript, but would nevertheless still need to be regarded as a separate booklet among others.

<sup>11</sup> This cannot be assumed since the truncation of this text plays a part in characterization in the *Series*. See my discussion below.

<sup>12</sup> It is important to distinguish between the type of production that copies multiple 'booklets' or bundles of quires simultaneously with a specific plan for a codex in mind and the type of booklet production that is apparent in MS HM 744 where the plan for the manuscript is open ended and can be modified. See Ralph Hanna III, 'Booklets in Medieval Manuscripts: Further Considerations', *Studies in Bibliography*, 39 (1986), 100-111 (pp. 106-107 n. 14).

<sup>13</sup> Graham Pollard, 'The *pecia* system in the medieval universities', in *Medieval Scribes, Manuscripts, and Libraries: essays presented to N. R. Ker*, ed. by M. B. Parkes, and Andrew G. Watson (London: Scolar Press, 1978) pp. 145-161 (pp. 145 and 152).

<sup>14</sup> The division is arbitrary, but very carefully annotated in order to ensure the continuity of the texts. One of the essential features of *pecia* copies and the *pecia* exemplars is the numbering system in place to coordinate the transcription. See Pollard, '*Pecia* system', pp. 152, 153.

<sup>15</sup> P.R. Robinson claims that they 'originated as a small but structurally independent production containing a single work or a number of short works': "'The Booklet,' a self-contained unit in composite manuscripts', *Codicologica*, 3 (1980), 46-69 (p. 46).

<sup>16</sup> Robinson, p. 47.

<sup>17</sup> Hanna, p. 107.

<sup>18</sup> Hanna, p. 101.

<sup>19</sup> Thomas Fyler had been an apprentice of William Estfeld; he was on the livery from 1439-40; in 1475 he was a mercer worth £10 p.a. 'Mercers' Company Biographical Index Cards; Laetitia Lyell and Frank D. Watney, *Acts of Court of the Mercers' Company: 1453-1527* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936), p. 78. See Anne Sutton, 'Alice Claver, Silkwoman (d. 1489)', in *London Medieval Widows 1300-1500*, ed. by C. M. Barron and A. F. Sutton (London: Hambledon Press, 1994), pp. 129-142 (p. 135 n. 18). Considering the devotional and didactic nature of both sections of MS HM 744, this manuscript may witness as much to the Fyler family's interests as it does to Hoccleve's poetry: the merchant class piety displayed by others connected to this family resonates with the didactic and religious texts in the whole book.



<sup>20</sup> Although the table for establishing the date of Easter has a rubric indicating it was written in 1386, it is a later copy. The death of Henry V in 1422 provides a *terminus post quem* for the binding together of this manuscript in its present form. The date 1444, written as part of a household inventory in the flyleaves at the end of the book, provides a *terminus ante quem*, given that it is in the same hand and refers to the Fyler family, whose deaths are recorded in the *computus* that opens the volume. The first recorded date in the *computus* is for Thomas Fyler in 1424 (fol. 1<sup>v</sup>), but this does not provide any precise information for dating the assembly of the manuscript for two reasons: first, as the first two quires had an existence independent of the latter six, the date may have been written in 1424 but before the manuscripts were one; second, it could have been written well after the fact. This information does suggest that the two parts of MS HM 744 were bound together while in the hands of the Fyler family. Although it does not affect my argument, J. A. Burrow and A. I. Doyle place this dating marginally later, to the third quarter of the fifteenth century, given that the memoranda of the Fyler family covers the years 1424-73. *Autograph Verse Manuscripts*, p. xxiii.

<sup>21</sup> In addition to the scribal change, where Hoccleve begins writing his own text, other markers indicate that this is a separate booklet: ink ruling gives way to brown plummet and the page layout changes to accommodate poetry. The large opening capital (22 mm) and subject matter of the first poem suggest that this item was intended to open a text (the remaining capitals in the quire are 13mm, 11 mm, and 12 mm respectively).

<sup>22</sup> For the clarity of this argument, I number the booklets in the Hoccleve section of HM 744 from I-III and the items in his hand from 1-11, replacing the catalogue numbers. However, I retain the Quire numbers from the beginning of the manuscript in its present form. For a full description of this manuscript, see C. W. Dutschke, *Guide to Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Huntington Library*, 2 vols (San Marino: Huntington Library and Art Gallery, 1989), I, 247-251. A more detailed description appears in Burrow and Doyle, *Autograph Verse Manuscripts*, pp. xv-xvii.

<sup>23</sup> Booklets in one quire like this one may be even more common than we know. The physical aspects of one-quire booklets offer maximum flexibility to book producers: 'the producer of a codex, in a single-quire booklet, possesses a bibliographical unit which can potentially be fitted into nearly any context.' Hanna, p. 105.

<sup>24</sup> See Furnivall, *Hoccleve's Works*, pp. 243-253.

<sup>25</sup> The one remaining problem with this quire is that it is ruled in dry point whereas the other quires in Hoccleve's section of the manuscript are ruled in brown plummet. This evidence does not confirm or refute booklet production: it could indicate that he used an old quire or changed his practice within this one quire.

<sup>26</sup> Probably referring to Henry V's return in February 1421.

<sup>27</sup> In the first of the roundels, Hoccleve appeals to lady money for help. In the second, she responds by telling him that he did not handle his money well and therefore deserves no more. The third closes with a conceit praising lady money's virtues.

<sup>28</sup> Burrow and Doyle note that, 'the smaller fourth gathering suggests that it was at first planned to finish on fol. 52v, but that he subsequently decided to continue copying on further quires.' They also note the erasure under the second line, which 'may reflect either a change of mind about the sequel or merely a modification of wording.' *Autograph Verse Manuscripts*, p. xxiv.

<sup>29</sup> Because Hoccleve wrote 3 stanzas per page throughout all of his poetry, if he had wanted to complete his text at the *Epistre* he could have used a 10 leaf quire as Quire 6. If he had, he would have had only space for one stanza at the bottom of the last verso leaf of this quire. The fact that he had begun another quire and had to shorten it indicates that he had expected the project to be ongoing.

<sup>30</sup> Hanna, p. 107.

<sup>31</sup> Booklets are an efficient way of producing relatively lengthy books in an uncertain market by providing medieval booksellers, 'who typically produced works to order in what is considered a 'bespoke trade,' a way to have some ready stock, especially of popular texts, without the major investment inherent in producing a full codex 'on spec'.... The booklet occurs with such frequency because of its cheapness and its flexibility: this unit involves a rather minimal commitment of resources while still allowing ongoing book-production.' Hanna, pp. 101-02.

<sup>32</sup> The *Series* is arranged as follows in Durham, University Library, MS Cosin V.iii.9:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. fol. 3 <sup>r</sup>                    | Prologue to the 'Complaint'   |
| 2. fols 3 <sup>v</sup> -8 <sup>v</sup>    | 'Complaint'   |
| 3. fols 9 <sup>r</sup> -26 <sup>v</sup>   | 'Dialogue'  |
| 4. fols 26 <sup>v</sup> -49 <sup>r</sup>  | 'Tale of Jereslaus's Wife' (Ellis: <i>Fabula de quadam imperatrice Romana</i> )     |
| 5. fols 49 <sup>r</sup> -49 <sup>v</sup>  | Prologue to Moralization to the 'Tale of Jereslaus's Wife'                          |
| 6. fols 50 <sup>r</sup> -52 <sup>v</sup>  | Moralization to the 'Tale of Jereslaus's Wife'                                      |
| 7. fols 52 <sup>r</sup> -74 <sup>r</sup>  | 'Learn to Die' (Ellis: <i>et incipit ars vtilissima sciendi mori</i> )              |
| 8. fol. 74 <sup>v</sup>                   | Prologue to a Lesson on all Saints' Day   |
| 9. fols 75 <sup>r</sup> -77 <sup>r</sup>  | A Lesson on All Saints' Day   |
| 10. fols 77 <sup>r</sup> -79 <sup>r</sup> | Prologue to the 'Tale of Jonathas'  |
| 11. fols 79 <sup>v</sup> -93 <sup>r</sup> | 'Tale of Jonathas' (Ellis: <i>Hic additur alia fabula ad instanciam amici mei</i> ) |
| 12. fols 93 <sup>v</sup> -95 <sup>r</sup> | Moralization to the 'Tale of Jonathas'  |
| 13. fol. 95 <sup>r</sup>                  | Envoy to the Countess of Westmorland  |

<sup>33</sup> Although he uses some of the conventions of a dream vision in the framing of this text, Hoccleve emphasises his lack of sleep. See Christina Von Nolcken, "O, why ne had y lerned for to die?": *Lerne for to Dye* and the Author's Death in Thomas Hoccleve's *Series*', *Essays in Medieval Studies*, 10 (1993), 27-51 (pp. 30-31).

<sup>34</sup> All citations from the 'Complaint' and 'Dialogue' are noted *C* and *D* followed by line numbers; they are taken from *Thomas Hoccleve's Complaint and Dialogue*, ed. by J. A. Burrow, EETS o.s. 313 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). All citations from the remaining texts of the *Series* are taken from *'My Compleinte' and Other Poems*, ed. by Roger Ellis, (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2001). In my citations I follow Ellis for the titles of these texts; however, in the text I use the more conventional titles based on F. J. Furnivall's edition.

<sup>35</sup> See James Simpson, 'Madness and Texts: Hoccleve's *Series*', in *Chaucer and Fifteenth-Century Poetry*, ed. by Julia Boffey and Janet Cowan, King's College London Medieval Studies, V (Exeter: Short Run Press, 1991), pp. 15-29 (p. 16).

<sup>36</sup> A. G. Rigg, 'Hoccleve's *Complaint* and Isidore of Seville', *Speculum*, 45 (1970), 564-74.

<sup>37</sup> John Burrow, 'Hoccleve's *Complaint* and Isidore of Seville Again', *Speculum*, 73 (1998), 424-428 (p. 428).

<sup>38</sup> Burrow, 'Hoccleve and Isidore Again', p. 428.

<sup>39</sup> See Burrow, *Complaint and Dialogue*, p. 105, n. D662.

<sup>40</sup> Jacques Le Goff, 'Merchant's Time and Church's Time in the Middle Ages,' in *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), pp. 29-42 (p. 35).

<sup>41</sup> Le Goff, p. 30.

<sup>42</sup> Le Goff, p. 31.

<sup>43</sup> In his dating of the *Series*, Burrow implicitly uses Hoccleve's depiction of Michaelmas and Lent.

<sup>44</sup> Graham Pollard, 'The Company of Stationers Before 1557', *The Library*, 4<sup>th</sup> Series, 18 (1937), pp. 1-38 (p. 15).

<sup>45</sup> Doyle and Parkes.

<sup>46</sup> See Von Nolcken, pp. 38-43 for a different reading of the use of Michaelmas and Lent.

<sup>47</sup> Wherever he plans to use it, he claims that he will no longer occupy himself by writing in English once it is finished (*D* 239-40).

<sup>48</sup> See Burrow, 'Experience and Books', p. 264 and Von Nolcken.

<sup>49</sup> Ethan Knapp, *The Bureaucratic Muse: Thomas Hoccleve and the Literature of Late Medieval England* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), pp. 85-93 (esp.

p. 85): 'This association between writing and mortality lurks near the surface of any bureaucratic apparatus.'

<sup>50</sup> He invites comparison with the Old Man in the *Regiment of Princes*, especially for readers of manuscripts in which it appeared with the *Series*.

<sup>51</sup> Considering the unflattering representation of regency that appears in the 'Tale of Jereslaus's Wife,' it is surprising that Hoccleve dedicates this text to Humphrey in the hope of remuneration. Cf. Lee Patterson, 'What is Me?', *Studies in the Age of Chaucer*, 23 (2001), 437-70 (p. 448).

<sup>52</sup> See Thompson, pp. 81-3 and Bowers, 'Two Copies of "Lerne to Dye"', pp. 437-72.

<sup>53</sup> Knapp, p. 181.

<sup>54</sup> I refer to the title in Ellis VII.3: *Fabula de quadam imperatrice Romana*.

<sup>55</sup> Most *Gesta Romanorum* texts included moralization as part of their apparatus. For a discussion of these texts as story-collections, see Helen Cooper, *The Structure of the Canterbury Tales* (London: Duckworth, 1983), esp. Chapter 1.

<sup>56</sup> Hanna, p. 108.

<sup>57</sup> I refer to the title in Ellis VII.4: *et incipit ars vtillissima sciendi mori. Cum omnes homines naturaliter scire desiderant etc.*

<sup>58</sup> See Von Nolcken, p. 41.

<sup>59</sup> I refer to the title in Ellis VII.5: *Hic additur alia fabula ad instanciam amici mei predilecti assiduam*.

<sup>60</sup> It would be surprising if it did reflect these aspects of material production, given that Burrow has clearly shown that it was not a fair-copy, but descended from a previous text, which he terms the Variant Original (VO) and Ellis describes as \*H. See Burrow, *Complaint and Dialogue*, pp. xviii-xxii.

<sup>61</sup> See Bonaventure's commentary on Peter Lombard's *Libri sententiarum*; for an English translation of this part of the text, see A. J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic literary attitudes in the later Middle Ages* (London: Scholar Press, 1984), p. 94.

<sup>62</sup> Geoffrey of Vinsauf, *Documentum de Arte Versificandi*, II.2.1, *Les Arts Poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe Siècle*, ed. by Edmond Faral (Paris: É. Champion, 1924), ll. 43-44. The gloss appears in Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS Selden Supra 53, Laud misc. 735, Bodley 221; and Durham, University Library, MS Cosin V.iii.9. John Burrow identifies its source. *Complaint and Dialogue*, p. 104 nD638-9. The passage is cited in *Troilus and Criseyde* I.1065-71, but Jerome Mitchell shows that Hoccleve was not dependent on Chaucer. *Thomas Hoccleve: A Study in Early Fifteenth-Century English Poetic* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1968), p. 120.

<sup>63</sup> By invoking both aspects of 'making,' Hoccleve may have followed the French poet Guillaume de Machaut, whom Sylvia Huot asserts was one of the earliest writers to realise that

the vernacular poet could also represent himself as a producer of books. Sylvia Huot, *From Song to Book: the Poetics of Writing in Old French Lyric and Lyrical Narrative Poetry* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 235. On the influence of the French Poets on Hoccleve, see J. A. Burrow, 'Hoccleve and the Middle French Poets', in *The Long Fifteenth Century: Essays for Douglas Gray*, ed. by Helen Cooper and Sally Mapstone (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), pp. 35-49.

<sup>64</sup> Derek Pearsall argues that, 'what Chaucer left behind him when he died was a mass of papers, in which the tales he had written formed a series of fragments, some consisting of one tale only, with prologue and possibly also ending material, and others consisting of anything from two to six tales, fully integrated internally with dramatic links.' *The Life of Geoffrey Chaucer: A Critical Biography* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), p. 233. For further discussion of the form of the *Tales* in relation to the Trinity Gower scribes, see Doyle and Parkes, pp. 223-232.

<sup>65</sup> I am not denying the possibility for autobiographical information in this text: I merely want to stress the assertion that the *Series's* frame, at least in terms of book production, is fictional.

<sup>66</sup> *Caxton's Book of Curtesye*, ed. by Frederick J. Furnivall, EETS e.s. 3 (London: Trübner and Co., 1868) ll. 351-56; 362-64 (I have cited the transcription taken from Oxford, Oriel College MS 79).

<sup>67</sup> Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 178-84. She writes that, 'character indeed results from one's experience, but that includes the experiences of others, often epitomised in ethical commonplaces, and made one's own by constant recollection,' p. 179.