

‘In bookes thus writen I fynde’: Hoccleve’s Self-Glossing in the *Regiment of Princes* and the *Series*

Over the last 10 or 15 years, paratexts of all kinds have attracted increasing amounts of critical attention. With medieval texts, such attention has been linked both to attempts to define and refine the fluid and experimental theories of authorship current in the period and to the fast-developing fields of book history and the material text.<sup>1</sup> But although Hoccleve is among the authors to have benefited from this approach, most notably in John Burrow’s edition of the ‘Complaint’ and ‘Dialogue’ and David Watt’s study of the *Series* in its entirety through the lens of its holographs, the glosses that appear in a number of manuscripts have been relatively little discussed.<sup>2</sup> This is

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Sian Echard, ‘With Carmen’s Help: Latin Authorities in the *Confessio Amantis*’, *Studies in Philology* 95 (1998), 1-40, and her ‘Designs for Reading: Some Manuscripts of Gower’s *Confessio Amantis*’, *Trivium* 31 (1999), 59-72; Stephen Partridge, ‘Glosses in the Manuscripts of Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*: An Edition and Commentary’ (unpublished PhD. thesis, Harvard University, 1992), and his ‘“The Makere of this Boke”: Chaucer’s Retraction and the Author as Scribe and Compiler’, in *Author, Reader, Book: Medieval Authorship in Theory and Practice*, ed. Stephen Partridge and Erik Kwakkel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), pp. 106-53; K. P. Clarke, *Chaucer and Italian Textuality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 129-62; Alexandra Gillespie, ‘Framing Lydgate’s *Fall of Princes*: The Evidence of Book History’, *Mediaevalia* 20 (2001), 153-78, and her *Print Culture and the Medieval Author: Chaucer, Lydgate, and their Books, 1473-1557* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Carl James Grindley, ‘Reading *Piers Plowman* C-Text Annotations: Notes toward the Classification of Printed and Written Marginalia in Texts from the British Isles 1300-1641’, in *The Medieval Professional Reader at Work: Evidence from Manuscripts of Chaucer, Langland, Kempe, and Gower*, ed. Kathryn Kerby-Fulton and Maidie Hilmo (Victoria: University of Victoria Press, 2001), pp. 73-141; and C. David Benson and Lynne Blanchfield, *The Manuscripts of Piers Plowman: The B-Version* (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 1997).

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Hoccleve, *Complaint and Dialogue*, ed. J. A. Burrow, EETS os 313 (Oxford, 1999); David Watt, *The Making of Hoccleve’s Series* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012). Marcia Smith Marzec has written on the implications of the glossing of the *Regiment* for our understanding of its textual tradition (‘The Latin Marginalia of the *Regiment of Princes* as an Aid to Stemmatic Analysis’, *Text* 3 (1987), 269-84); Aditi Nafde has considered them as part of the mise-en-page of Hoccleve manuscripts (‘Deciphering the Manuscript Page: The Mise-en-Page of Chaucer, Gower, and Hoccleve Manuscripts’, unpublished DPhil. thesis, University of Oxford, 2012); A. G. Rigg has used the glossing of Hoccleve’s ‘Complaint’ in the *Series* to identify his source (‘Hoccleve’s Complaint and Isidore of Seville’, *Speculum* 45 (1970), 564-74), and John Burrow has modified his findings (‘Hoccleve’s Complaint and Isidore of Seville Again’, *Speculum* 73 (1998), 424-8). Discussions of their literary functions are rare, however, although Charles R. Blyth considers them briefly in his edition of the *Regiment* (*The Regiment of Princes* (Kalamazoo:

despite the fact that, among fifteenth-century authors, Hoccleve is one of those most intimately involved with the publication of his works.<sup>3</sup> The two holograph manuscripts now in the Huntington Library, MSS HM 111 and HM 744, gather together all of his shorter poems, while Durham MS Cosin V.III.9 preserves a second holograph copy of the *Series*.<sup>4</sup> Of the 44 surviving manuscripts of the *Regiment of Princes*, BL MSS Arundel 38, Harley 4866, and Royal 17.D.vi were produced in Hoccleve's life-time, possibly under his supervision, and Linne Mooney has recently argued that BL MS Royal 17.D.xviii is a holograph witnessing a revised version of the poem.<sup>5</sup> The fact that these manuscripts, as well as many scribal copies, share a substantial number of glosses, suggests that these should be understood as an integral part of his works: an exercise in self-glossing analogous to that performed by Gower in the *Confessio Amantis*, and one that Chaucer, too, may have engaged in.<sup>6</sup> Focusing on the *Regiment* and the *Series*, this article argues that Hoccleve's glosses are a material manifestation of his interest in the processes by which texts come into being and that, both by contributing to the dialogic form of his works and by reflecting larger questions of *translatio*, they provide an opportunity to examine the connections between his poetic theory and his poetic practice.

In both of Hoccleve's major works, the *Regiment of Princes* (1410-11) and the *Series* (c.1420), the majority of glosses are citation glosses, providing quotations from the

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Medieval Institute Publications, 1999), pp. 11-12), as does Karen Smyth, *Imaginations of Time in Lydgate and Hoccleve's Verse* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 120-1.

<sup>3</sup> For Hoccleve's self-publication, see for example J. A. Burrow, 'Hoccleve's *Series*: Experience and Books', in *Fifteenth Century Studies: Recent Essays*, ed. Robert F. Yeager (Hamden: Archon Books, 1984), pp. 259-75.

<sup>4</sup> For a description of these manuscripts, see Watt, *Making of Hoccleve's Series*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>5</sup> See further Blyth, *Regiment*, pp.16-17; and Linne R. Mooney, 'A Holograph Copy of Thomas Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes*', *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 33 (2011), 263-296. For a description of the manuscripts of the *Regiment*, see M. C. Seymour, 'The Manuscripts of Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes*', *Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions* 4: 7 (1974), 255-93; A. S. G. Edwards, 'Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes*: A Further Manuscript', *Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions* 5 (1978), 32. For the early popularity and subsequent failure of the *Regiment* to be widely disseminated, see John M. Bowers, *Chaucer and Langland: The Antagonistic Tradition* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), pp. 190-202.

<sup>6</sup> For an overview of these and other broadly contemporary instances of self-glossing, see Jane Griffiths, *Diverting Authorities: Experimental Glossing Practices from Manuscript to Print* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 7-11.

texts on which Hoccleve has drawn in composing his work, or from those that contain analogous material. There are some exceptions; in the later stages of the *Regiment*, in particular, a number of glosses provide a rudimentary index to the subjects of the text. For the most part, however, the glosses do not respond to Hoccleve's writing, but visibly link his work to previous writing, buttressing his poems in such a way as to imply simply by their appearance on the page that their content is known and approved. In many cases this is confirmed by the close relationship between the contents of text and gloss; the Latin prose citations provide in relatively concise form the teaching that Hoccleve's text presents more discursively. The three stanzas on swearing and their accompanying glosses, taken from the *Regiment*, serve as an example:

A greet clerk which clept is Crisostomus,  
Where he of matire of swerynge tretith,  
Thise arn the wordes that he writ to us:  
'What man the custume of oothes nat lettith  
In sweryng ofte, what he seith forgetith.  
Usage of oothes of perjurie is cause.'  
And more he seith eke in the same clause.

He seith, 'Perjurie engendrid is of oothes,  
For right as he that custumablely  
Clappith and janglith and to stynte looth is,  
Moot othirwhyly speke unsittynghly,  
Right so usage of sweryng enemy  
To trouthe is, and makith men hem forswere.'  
Ful necessarie is oothes to forbere.

Swering hath thise thre condicions  
Folwyng, as trouthe, doom, and rightwisnesse.  
Ooth axith trouthe and no decepcions,  
But swere in his entente soothfastnesse;  
Doom moot discreetly, lest al hastynesse,  
Swere, and nat needles; and justice also,

Leefffully swere, and justly everemo.

(ll. 2339-59)<sup>7</sup>

These stanzas are flanked by lengthy glosses from two separate sources, complete with attributions: ‘Crisostomus super Matthaum omelia 12: Nisi consuetudo interdicatur, non possunt amputari perjuria. Ex juramento enim perjurium generatur; sicut enim qui habet in consuetudine multum loqui neccesse est ut aliquando importune loquatur, sic qui habet consuetudinem jurare in rebus ydoneis frequenter et in rebus superfluis etiam nolens consuetudine trahente perjurat’ [Crisostomos on Matthew, Homily 12: ‘Unless the usage is forbidden, perjuries cannot be curtailed. For perjury is begotten of an oath; for just as the person who by habit speaks a lot sometimes speaks unsuitably, so he who habitually swears frequently in suitable circumstances, also by following habit when it is unnecessary, commits perjury though he does not wish to’]; ‘In Canone xxii. quaestio ii, Isti tres: Juramentum tres habet conditiones, videlicet, veritatem, iudicium et justiciam. Veritatem s[c]ilicet, ut jurans sciat vel credat verum esse quod jurat. Iudicium, id est discretionem, ut discrete juret, non precipitanter, et cetera’ [Canons 22, quaestio 2, ‘These three: “Swearing an oath has three requirements, namely, truth, judgment, and justice. Truth, namely that in swearing one know or believe true what he swears. Judgment, that is prudence, that he swear wisely, not precipitately”, etc.’].

The correspondences between text and gloss are characteristically close. Hoccleve’s first stanza amplifies the first of Crisostom’s sentences and gives a discursive form of attribution to him, while the second stanza is based on his second sentence, and the third, on the Biblical citation. Latin sources and English translation are brought into close juxtaposition, setting contemporary advice in a timeless frame; the near-duplication of text and gloss suggests that the *sententiae* of existing texts may be extracted and re-presented with no loss of relevance or change of meaning. The visual impact of the glosses and what is implied by their content thus come together to suggest that this is a text whose authority derives from a source external to itself. Although they are very different in kind from the Latin summary glosses that Gower included in his *Confessio Amantis*, they resemble Gower’s in demonstrating that a

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<sup>7</sup> All quotations from the *Regiment* and translations of its glosses will be taken from Blyth, *Regiment*.

vernacular text is ‘cased or boxed in Latin’, and thus implicitly authoritative.<sup>8</sup> And – unlike that of Gower’s summarizing glosses – the content of Hoccleve’s marginal citations seems to emphasize this authorizing effect: whereas Gower’s glosses represent a creative adaptation of academic commentary, and thus emphasize the interpretative processes involved in *translatio*, Hoccleve’s record in the margins of passages from his sources implies that no such interpretation or alteration is necessary.<sup>9</sup> They apparently constitute a physical representation, on the manuscript page, of a theory of authorship according to which, in Evelyn Tribble’s words, ‘the *auctor* is always an other, located outside the writer and conferring authority from a historical distance [and in which] authority ... implies a grounding, a foundation, an origin to which the present writer refers and defers’.<sup>10</sup> The phrase with which Hoccleve prefaces many of his citations, ‘scriptum est’, is particularly telling in this regard, implying that they do not simply authorize specific details of Hoccleve’s arguments, but assert the innate trustworthiness of the written word *because* it is written, as if this were a guarantee of its permanence, and its timeless, immutable meaning.<sup>11</sup>

Matters are not really quite so simple, however. In the *Regiment*, Hoccleve’s glosses are just one of the text’s distinctly articulated parts. The most obvious division is between the lengthy introductory section, in which the figure of ‘Thomas Hoccleve’ confronts anxieties about his life – most notably his financial situation – and is counseled by a still more impoverished old man, and the *Regiment* ‘proper’, the

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<sup>8</sup> The phrase is Derek Pearsall’s, in his ‘Gower’s Latin in the *Confessio Amantis*’, in *Latin and the Vernacular: Studies in Late Medieval Texts and Manuscripts*, ed. A. J. Minnis (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1989), p. 18.

<sup>9</sup> For Gower, see Rita Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics and Translation in the Middle Ages: Academic Tradition and Vernacular Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 202-20.

<sup>10</sup> Evelyn B. Tribble, *Margins and Marginality: The Printed Page in Early Modern England* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1993), p. 2.

<sup>11</sup> This is confirmed by the way that some glosses that have an exact attribution in MS Harley 4866 are prefaced ‘scriptum est’ in the later holograph MS Royal 17.D.xviii. The implications are first, that Hoccleve was not working from an exemplar with all the attributions in place; second, that he considered ‘scriptum est’ to be an entirely adequate substitute for an attribution, even in a presentation manuscript.

mirror for princes addressed to the future Henry V.<sup>12</sup> Each of these parts takes the form of a dialogue – the first literally so, the second due to recurrent reminders that Henry is Hoccleve’s intended reader – and the relationship between the two parts of the text constitutes a further level of exchange. Thomas’s anxiety about the fickleness of fortune is not, of course, merely a concern for himself. Just as the Old Man is an image of what he most fears to become, the way in which he recalls how ‘nat longe agoon / Fortunes strook doun thraste estat rial / Into mescheef’ (ll. 22-4) serves as a pointed reminder to Prince Henry not just of fortune’s generic mutability, but very specifically of the insecurity of his own position: what his father did to Richard II may be done to him in turn.<sup>13</sup> Without directly threatening the prince, the lines imply that he may well have as much need of the advice that Hoccleve is about to provide for him as Hoccleve himself has of the prince’s financial support. At the same time, Hoccleve implies that a prince who is willing to accept the *Regiment* is one who has already internalized its advice, and who – although he has no real need of it – will reward its poet ‘not as mere compensation, but as a sign of his devotion to morality’.<sup>14</sup> The text is thus structured as an extended series of mirrors. Not only is the *Regiment* proper a *speculum* providing Henry with an image of the ideal ruler, but the Old Man mirrors Thomas; both together mirror Prince Henry; and the prince

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<sup>12</sup> I follow Nicholas Perkins in referring to the first part of the *Regiment* as the ‘Dialogue’ rather than the ‘Prologue’; for the rationale, see his *Hoccleve’s Regiment of Princes: Counsel and Constraint* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2001), pp. 178-85.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Larry Scanlon, *Narrative, Authority, and Power: The Medieval Exemplum and the Chaucerian Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 302-3; for the possibility that the lines may be taken to refer to Henry IV, or even to Prince Henry himself, rather than to the obvious candidate Richard II, see Lee Patterson, ‘“What Is Me?”: Self and Society in the Poetry of Thomas Hoccleve’, *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 23 (2001), 458. For the mirror-relationship between Thomas and the Old Man, see Anna Torti, *The Glass of Form: Mirroring Structures from Chaucer to Skelton* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1991), pp. 87-106; Scanlon, *Narrative, Authority, and Power*, pp. 303-8; cf. also Judith Ferster, *Fictions of Advice: The Literature and Politics of Counsel in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), pp. 137-59. For more directly political readings, see Paul Strohm, *England’s Empty Throne: Usurpation and the Language of Legitimation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 180-6; and Jenni Nuttall, for whom the reformed yet nonetheless penurious Thomas ‘embodies the Lancastrian Crown’s financial difficulties’ (*The Creation of Lancastrian Kingship: Literature, Language and Politics in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 3).

<sup>14</sup> Scanlon, *Narrative, Authority, Power*, p. 307. For Hoccleve’s strategic portrayal of his relationship with Henry, see further Robert J. Meyer-Lee, *Poets and Power from Chaucer to Wyatt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), esp. pp. 107-14.

himself is flatteringly presented as impervious to flattery, and hence as a mirror to others. Drawn primarily from Hoccleve's source-texts, the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secreta Secretorum*, Aegidius Romanus' *De regimine principum*, and Jacobus de Cessolis' *De ludo scaccorum*, the glosses provide points of reference that seem to stand firmly outside this series of self-reflexive likenesses.<sup>15</sup> It is their heteroglossia, their status as 'another's speech in another's language', that gives them their authority; by contrast to the contingent meanings of the text they surround, they appear to convey timeless sententiae.<sup>16</sup>

Yet despite their apparent immutability, the glosses are used to highly timely, rhetorical effect. Thus, several of the potentially contentious points in the text are attributed to authors other than Hoccleve, as when one piece of particularly direct advice as to appropriate princely behaviour is attributed to Aristotle:

A prince moot been of condicioun  
 Pitous, and his angyr refreyne and ire,  
 Lest an unavysid commocioun  
 Him chaufe so and sette his herte on fyre,  
 That him to venge as blyve he desyre,  
 And fulfille it in dede. Him owith knowe  
 His errour, and qwenche that fyry lowe.

(ll. 3102-8)

The first gloss to these lines takes the form of what appears to be a fairly precise reference, but in fact misattributes Aegidius' work: 'Aristoteles, in principum regimine, capitulo de regis providentia'. The attribution of Aegidius' *De regimine principum* to Aristotle was a common one in the period, yet in Hoccleve's *Regiment* it appears not to be purely conventional, but an instance of a more extensive practice of misattribution: at several points he attributes quotations taken from Jacobus de Cessolis to the sources cited by Jacobus, and occasionally he gives entirely spurious

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<sup>15</sup> For Hoccleve's sources and his use of them, see further Perkins, *Hoccleve's Regiment*, pp. 85-125.

<sup>16</sup> The definition of heteroglossia is taken from M. M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), p. 324.

attributions.<sup>17</sup> This habit may be a tacit acknowledgement of the fact that Hoccleve's main source texts, Aegidius' *De regimine principum* and De Cessolis' *De ludo scaccorum* were themselves potentially contentious tracts against tyranny rather than treatises on good governance.<sup>18</sup> Although citation of Hoccleve's immediate sources in both text and margins posits Hoccleve as translator and compiler, rather than originator, of the advice he provides, his misattributions constitute a further deflection, with the aim of reaffirming what Paul Strohm has called his 'strategic unexceptionality' – that is, not only his *own* unexceptionality, but that of his sources as well.<sup>19</sup>

Such diplomatic deployment of sources is one way in which the glosses belie their straightforward appearance. Another is the way in which their use enables Hoccleve to advise through the form as well as the content of the *Regiment*. It has long been recognized that Hoccleve's use of the dialogue form is not politically neutral. Hoccleve frequently adds direct speech to the exempla taken from his sources, and it has been argued that his 'alterations of voice ... have a cumulative effect, placing dialogue between ruler and subject at the centre of the poem', thus implicitly as well as explicitly discouraging individualist tyrannous rule.<sup>20</sup> The proliferation of glosses has a comparable effect. As well as stabilizing the text by underwriting its moral instruction, they contribute to its 'bricolage' of voices, and thus suggest that 'authority' is not monolithic, but rather something to be constructed through negotiation of different perspectives, so that good reading becomes an image of good governance.<sup>21</sup> In Hoccleve's warning to Henry to beware of flatterers, for example, the recommendation:

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<sup>17</sup> See Blyth, *Regiment*, p. 12.

<sup>18</sup> See Perkins, *Hoccleve's Regiment*, pp. 89-90 and pp. 99-102.

<sup>19</sup> Strohm, *England's Empty Throne*, p. 180.

<sup>20</sup> Perkins, *Hoccleve's Regiment*, p. 107; cf. Scanlon's argument that counsel in the *Regiment* is 'a transformation of royal power to virtue that occurs in and through speech' (*Narrative, Authority, Power*, p. 315).

<sup>21</sup> The term 'bricolage' is taken from Taylor Cowdery's 'Dialogic Collapse and Royal Presence: Inventio and the "Makyng" of a King in Thomas Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes*', paper given at the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Medieval Congress, Kalamazoo, 10 May 2014. Cf. Scanlon's argument that the text of the *Regiment* contains a repeated reminder of the importance of dialogue in the consistency with which Hoccleve addresses Henry in the second person, and in the inclusion (in MSS Arundel 38 and Royal 17.D.vi) of a miniature of the poet presenting his book to the prince precisely at



... conseil take of the wyse

And nat of fooles

...

Cheesith eek good men, and away shove

The wikkid whos conseil is deceyvable;

Thus biddith Holy Writ, it is no fable

(ll. 4936-7; 4940-2)

is accompanied not by one gloss, but by five, of which four are Biblical. These provide minimally different versions of the linked messages that one should take counsel only of the wise, and that the impious are by definition foolish and therefore not to be heeded: 'Thobie 4: Consilium semper a sapiente perquire et non a fatuo' [Tobias 4 [: 19]: 'Seek counsel always of a wise man and not of a fool']; 'Scriptum est, Cum fatuis non habeas consilium, quia non possunt diligere nisi quod eis placet, et cetera' [It is written, 'Do not take counsel with fools because they are not able to choose except what pleases them, etc']; 'Iterum Thobie 4: Omnia consilia tua in deo permaneant, et cetera' [Again Tobias 4: '[Desire that] all your counsels may abide in God, etc']; 'Scriptum est, Cum bonis fac tuum consilium, non cum impiis, et cetera' [It is written, 'Take your counsel with the good and not with the impious, etc']; 'Proverbiarum 12: Consilia impiorum fraudulenta [Proverbs 12 [: 3]: 'The counsels of the impious are fraudulent']'.<sup>22</sup> Thus, rather than the text providing an almost verbatim translation of a single gloss, it becomes one of a number of parallel texts, each providing a variation on a theme. Rather than directly transferring meaning from an old text to a new, the use of multiple glosses encourages a comparative kind of reading that is the textual counterpart of engaging in dialogue. As Karen Smyth has argued:

While the various narrative episodes enact the moral of the digressions in the text proper, Hoccleve also extracts the stable signifier of these moral lessons – the Latin

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the point where the direct address to Henry – the *Regiment* proper – begins (*Narrative, Authority, Power*, p. 309). An equivalent miniature was originally also included in MS Harley 4866, but has been cut out.

<sup>22</sup> The second quotation, which is unattributed in manuscript, is taken from Ecclesiasticus 8. 20; the fourth is of unknown origin.

explanations and associations – from the narrative, by placing them literally in the physical framework. Thus the apparatus of the glosses implies a hermeneutical frame of reading advice about reading the advice, rather than the persuasive enactment we would expect in a didactic genre.<sup>23</sup>

The potentially radical consequences of such advisory tactics are clear from the following stanza, where the text exhorts:

Cheesith men eek of old experience

...

Waar of yong conseil, it is perillous.

Roboas fond it so whan he forsook

Old conseil and unto yong reed him took.

(ll. 4943; 4947-9)

The gloss provides details of Roboas' error: '3 Regum 12: Ad Roboam dixerunt juvenes [qui nutriti erant] cum eo: "Sic loqueris ad eos: Minimus digitus meus est grossior dorso patris mei; et nunc pater meus posuit super vos iugum grave; ego autem addam super iugum vestrum; pater meus cecidit vos flagellis; ego autem cedam eos scorpionibus, et cetera' [3 Kings 12 [:10-11]: 'The youths who were with him said to Roboam: "Thus you will say to them: My smallest finger is larger than my father's back, and already my father placed upon you a heavy yoke. I moreover will add to your yoke. My father felled you with scourges; I moreover will fell you with scorpions", etc ']. The effect of this is the opposite of the attribution of a potentially controversial piece of advice to a source other than Hoccleve; in a text addressed to the future Henry V, the gloss invites a reading that is far more politically contentious than that of the text, but does so only implicitly, and only for the reader who reads dialogically, across the gap between text and gloss.

This gloss, then, demonstrates how the form of the text may exemplify the kind of dialogue the *Regiment* seeks to foster through its content. It also shows how, rather than adducing authorizing pre-texts for Hoccleve's *speculum*, the glosses may serve

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<sup>23</sup> Smyth, *Imaginings of Time*, p. 121.

as an active *part* of his text: one of the means by which ‘compiling’ shades into ‘authoring’.<sup>24</sup> Although, as he will do again in the *Series*, Hoccleve presents himself as ‘noon auctor’ of the text, his manipulation of citations shows that he is, in a very real sense, in control of it. The *auctores* who are cited in his margins are less invoked than deployed: their appearance looks forward to Hoccleve’s readers at least as much as it looks back to the authoritative texts that are cited. In Smyth’s words again, one consequence of his glossing is a foregrounding of ‘the role of the interpreter’ that makes visible the way in which he creates new meanings from old, and thus reveals him to have precisely the originary authority he denies.<sup>25</sup>

It is not surprising, then, that at certain points we find a quite noticeable level of play – of tension, or contradiction – between text and gloss. Some of the most striking instances are found in the ‘Dialogue’ that precedes the *Regiment* proper. At first sight, these appear fairly straightforward; the gloss to the Old Man’s first speech, for example, corresponds almost verbatim to the text, just as so many of the glosses do in the body of the *Regiment*:

The Book seith thus – I redde it yore agoon:    Ve soli quia si cadat non habet subleuantem.  
‘Wo be to him that list to been allone,  
For if he falle, help ne hath he noon  
To ryse.’

(ll. 204-7)

Here the text does the work of the introductory formula ‘scriptum est’ that we find in so many of the glosses, emphasizing the importance of having a written source for the advice that is given. Its almost verbatim translation of the gloss suggests that the fictional Old Man embodies textual authority: that he has learned to read his experience in the light of the Latin *auctoritas* and thus forms an instructive example of effective reader as well as reformed prodigal. In A. C. Spearing’s words, his glosses embed ‘the mimesis of speech in forms that call attention unmistakably to

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. Smyth, *Imaginings of Time*, pp. 120-2.

<sup>25</sup> Smyth, *Imaginings of Time*, pp. 120-1.

their origin in writing'.<sup>26</sup> This is a consistent strategy throughout the 'Dialogue'. The majority of the glosses to the Old Man's speeches are taken from the Bible (particularly the Book of Proverbs), and thus constantly reaffirm the orthodoxy of the arguments with which he attempts to stabilize Thomas's mental vagaries; they provide an apparently independent witness to the accuracy of his frequent references to 'what is written' and 'the book'. Yet in the 'Dialogue' the very presence of glosses is remarkable in itself. Whereas in the *Regiment* proper Hoccleve was drawing on specific named sources, and assumes the voice of translator and compiler, the 'Dialogue' has no such sources, and is presented as a personal and private conversation between Thomas and the Old Man. The fact that it is glossed at all thus confirms that Hoccleve's glossing is not an unthinking replication of passages from his sources in the margins, but a rhetorical strategy: less evidence of a seamless transfer of meaning than a creation of the *impression* of seamless transfer.

This is reaffirmed by several points at which both text and gloss call into question the value of exemplary teaching through *translatio* on which the *Regiment* ostensibly depends. Some of the most striking of these occur early in the text. Despite his close association with textual authority, the Old Man comments wryly on his own use of *auctoritates*; after drawing on numerous Biblical exempla in order to condemn adultery, he declares: 'Of swiche stories cowde I telle an heep, / But I suppose thise shul souffyse' (ll. 1765-6). Even as he asserts that he could prove his point many times over, he also implies that the sheer weight of the material available to him threatens to become counterproductive. So too does the way in which he goes on to state his intention to 'make a leepe' away from the examples and back to his first purpose of comforting Thomas (ll. 1767-71). Like Troilus' impatient exclamation to Pandarus in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*: 'Lat be thyne olde ensaumples, I the preye' (I. 760), his lines suggest that texts are only dubiously relevant to present experience.<sup>27</sup> He thus voices a reservation that is also implicit in the glossing of

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<sup>26</sup> A. C. Spearing, *Medieval Autographies: The 'I' of the Text* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012), p. 170. Cf. Robyn Malo, 'Penitential Discourse in Hoccleve's *Series*', *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 34 (2012), 277-305.

<sup>27</sup> For detailed discussion of Hoccleve's allusions to *Troilus and Criseyde*, see Nicholas Perkins, 'Haunted Hoccleve? The *Regiment of Princes*, the Troilean Intertext, and Conversations with the Dead', *Chaucer Review* 43 (2008), 103-39; and Sebastian Langdell, '“What shal I calle thee? What is thy name?” Hoccleve, Chaucer,

Thomas's speeches in the 'Dialogue'. When Thomas declares that all worldly happiness inevitably ends in poverty:

And whan I hadde rollid up and doun  
This worldes stormy wawes in my mynde,  
I sy wel povert was exclusioun  
Of al welfare regnyng in mankynde;  
And how in bookes thus writen I fynde,  
'The werste kynde of wrecchidnesse is  
A man to have be weleful or this'

(ll. 50-6)

the gloss states: 'Boecius de consolatione: Maximum genus infortunii est fuisse felicem' [Boethius, *Consolation*: 'The worst kind of misfortune is to have once been happy.']. Given its prominence as the first gloss in the poem, this seems to signal what kind of text the *Regiment* will be, aligning it with previous writings in which a distressed first-person narrator is counseled by an authority figure and guided to faith in God's providence. In general terms, of course, the association is accurate. There are generic resemblances between the 'Dialogue' and Boethius' *Consolation*, and these were recognized by Hoccleve's near-contemporaries: there are three surviving manuscripts in which the *Regiment* appears alongside John Walton's 1410 translation of Boethius, and a number of early reader annotations also refer to the *Consolation*.<sup>28</sup> Yet there is nonetheless a noticeable discrepancy between the detail of the text and the gloss. The text shows Thomas misconstruing 'felicity' as exclusively *financial* 'wealth'; his disconsolate lines are a strangely worldly, pecuniary interpretation of the Boethian lines that advise that, because all things of the world are mutable, the remedy is to seek happiness in spiritual self-reliance instead.<sup>29</sup> Rather than confirming

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and the Architectonics of Fame', forthcoming. I am grateful to Dr Langdell for allowing me to see this article prior to publication.

<sup>28</sup> The manuscripts are Fitzwilliam Museum MS McClean 185; Society of Antiquaries MS 143; Rosenbach Foundation MS 1083/30 (Seymour, 'Manuscripts of Hoccleve's *Regiment*', 259-60). For consonances between the 'Dialogue' and Boethian consolation, see Perkins, *Hoccleve's Regiment*, pp. 180-1.

<sup>29</sup> For the failure of Boethian consolation in the *Regiment*, see further Ethan Knapp, *The Bureaucratic Muse: Thomas Hoccleve and the Literature of Late Medieval England* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), pp. 93-

Thomas's perspective, then, the gloss seeks to correct it, or show its limitations; although Thomas asserts that what he says is what 'in bookes thus writen I fynde', the citation either implies that the Boethian teaching is simply not relevant to Thomas, or alternatively identifies Thomas as a poor reader. In neither case does the written sententia transfer effortlessly to lived experience.

In a similar way, the following gloss is just slightly at odds with Thomas's claim that:

What wight that inly pensyf is, I trowe,  
His moost desir is to be solitarie.  
That this is sooth, in my persone I knowe.

(ll. 85-8)

Although the gloss, 'Unde Martialis Cocus: Ille dolet vere qui sine teste dolet' [Whence Martial the Cook: 'He truly grieves who grieves without a witness'] does address the same state of mind as the text, it suggests that want of companionship increases pensiveness, rather than that pensiveness creates the desire to be solitary. Moreover, there is a clear contrast between Thomas's assertion that he knows the truth of what he says from his own experience, and the appearance of a gloss that defines his experience as exemplary: not personal, but generic. The phrasing of the gloss is also curious; the introductory 'unde' ['whence'] suggests that here, unlike in the majority of citation glosses, Hoccleve's text gives rise to the gloss, rather than the other way around. All of these things show that the meaning of the gloss is not static; far from providing a point of stability that anchors Hoccleve's writing, it is itself dependent on the way it is interpreted. What Eleanor Johnson says of Hoccleve's use of Boethius in the *Series* – that it 'makes Boethius at once present, a living part of the contemporary readerly landscape of late medieval England, and profoundly past, a

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106; James Simpson, 'Nobody's Man: Thomas Hoccleve's *Regement of Princes*', in *London and Europe in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. Julia Boffey and Pamela King (London: Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Queen Mary and Westfield College, 1995), pp. 149-80 (esp. pp. 159-69). Other critics who have noted discrepancies between the 'Dialogue' and its Boethian pre-text include Blyth (*Regiment*, p. 8), and A. C. Spearing (*Medieval Autographies*, p. 147); cf. also Eleanor Johnson's reading of the *Series* in her *Practicing Literary Theory in the Middle Ages: Ethics and the Mixed Form in Chaucer, Gower, Usk, and Hoccleve* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), pp. 203-13.

literary forebear so always already overfamiliar that his work's power is more talismanic than actual' – is true of these citations in the margins of the *Regiment* too.<sup>30</sup> They draw attention to what we might call the 'conditions of reading' – the fact that it is only through reading and interpretation that authority and experience can be connected – but also to the difficulty of such interpretation, particularly the way in which a (fallible) reader may wrest a text from its intended sense. Although the *Regiment's* dialogic form is presented as politically beneficial, the glosses make visible the problems inherent in the very assumptions about textual stability and immutability of meaning on which their rhetorical efficacy depends.

They thus anticipate, in a discrete way, concerns that are more explicitly the focus of Hoccleve's *Series*. In John Burrow's words, this 'not only describes the making of a book, but *is* that book'.<sup>31</sup> It might be described as a highly self-conscious exploration of how the context in which a text is presented changes its meaning. Thus, the first lines of the 'Dialogue' completely alter our understanding of the 'Complaint', as the assumption that it is a finished piece of writing in an established genre is overturned by Hoccleve's reference to the business of writing it; the belated addition of the moral to the tale of Jereslaus' Wife changes it from a text in praise of a virtuous woman to a religious allegory; in the final part of the *Series*, 'Lerne to Dye', the abandonment of the dying man by his friends mirrors that of the narrator by *his* friends in the 'Complaint', and so retroactively justifies what appears from a first reading of the 'Complaint' alone, to be his paranoia.<sup>32</sup> The *Series'* record of second thoughts and additions is a fictional representation of the actual conditions of book production. As Watt has argued, Hoccleve's engagement with the process by which the text comes into being reflects his intimate knowledge of 'the conventions and constraints of contemporary book production'.<sup>33</sup> He shows a text being constructed from a series of

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<sup>30</sup> Johnson, *Practicing Literary Theory*, pp. 206-7.

<sup>31</sup> Burrow, 'Hoccleve's *Series*', p. 266.

<sup>32</sup> For the interplay between autobiography and literary convention in the *Series*, see John Burrow, 'Hoccleve's *Series*'; D. C. Greetham, 'Self-Referential Artifacts: Hoccleve's Persona as a Literary Device', *Modern Philology* 86 (1989), 242-51; Knapp, *Bureaucratic Muse*, pp. 159-83; James Simpson, 'Madness and Texts: Hoccleve's *Series*', in *Chaucer and Fifteenth-Century Poetry*, ed. Julia Boffey and Janet Cowen (London: Centre for Late Antique and Medieval Studies, 1991), pp. 15-29.

<sup>33</sup> Watt, *Making of Hoccleve's Series*, pp. 65-143.

booklets: that is, physically discrete units containing a single text or selection of texts which may be combined in any order, and re-ordered up to the time of their binding. Precisely because these texts are ‘only connected by “and” and “and”’, they are given meaning primarily by the figure of the writer who juxtaposes them.<sup>34</sup> The *Series* thus gives fictive representation to the transfer of authority that is implied by the glossing of the *Regiment*: by showing the construction of the text it makes the compiler more important than the component parts, the author more important than his inherited material.

For Hoccleve, this is not wholly a liberating or enabling discovery, however; rather, because it shows how the meaning of a text is subject to alteration, it is also a source of anxiety about the ‘truth value’ of authoritative texts, and by extension a source of anxiety about the stability of Hoccleve’s own writing: the extent to which its meaning, in turn, is likely to be altered by being taken out of context or misunderstood. The famous episode from the ‘Complaint’ in which Hoccleve attempts the impossible feat of catching sight of himself in a mirror unawares, so as to determine whether he looks ‘sane’, provides a striking objective correlative for this anxiety:

Many a saut made I / to this mirour  
 Thynkyng / ‘If þat I looke / in this maneere  
 Among folk / as now I do / noon errour  
 Of suspect look / may in my face appeere.  
 This contenance / I am seur / and this cheere  
 If I foorth vse / is no thyng repreeuable  
 To hem þat han / conceites resonable.’

(ll. 162-8)

As Knapp has argued, Thomas’s use of an actual mirror results in ‘a simultaneous presence of two images of the self and the consequent fragmentation of the self into both subject and object of perception’.<sup>35</sup> Mirror image and poetry are intimately

<sup>34</sup> The quotation is from Elizabeth Bishop, ‘Over 2,000 Illustrations and a Complete Concordance’, in *The Complete Poems 1927-1979* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1983), p. 58.

<sup>35</sup> Knapp, *Bureaucratic Muse*, p. 170.



linked. Like his literal self-image, Thomas's writing too is a public face, prepared to meet the faces he must meet; paradoxically, neither can represent the truth of his condition unless they conform to set conventions. And just as his demeanour is open to misinterpretation, so too is his writing. For Thomas, his written 'Complaint' is designed to correct the misreading of his public behaviour, yet the Friend who enters just as he has finished writing it simultaneously refuses to believe that anyone sees anything odd in Hoccleve's behaviour and argues that the 'Complaint' itself will confirm people's doubts about his sanity (ll. 22-35). The Friend's well-intentioned advice draws attention to the inevitable gap between form and content, or signifier and signified; it is itself a telling instance of the misinterpretation Thomas wishes to avoid.

The glosses of the *Series* both combat and emblemize such misunderstanding. At first sight, they appear surprisingly conventional for a text that in all other respects is so highly experimental. As in the *Regiment*, most are citation glosses. Those in the 'Complaint' are taken primarily from an epitome of Isidore of Seville's *Synonyma*; those in the 'Dialogue' from the Bible and from proverbs; those in the moralizations to the tales of Jereslaus' wife and Jonathas and Felicula also from the Bible; those in 'Lerne to Dye' from the *ars moriendi* contained in Henry Suso's *Seven Points of True Love*.<sup>36</sup> The fact that the moralizations and the explicitly didactic 'Lerne to Dye' are among the most prominently glossed parts suggests that the glosses are designed to highlight for the reader what the 'value' of Hoccleve's text is: although the complex form of the *Series* calls into question the possibility of identifying any stable 'truth-value' independent of context, the glosses seem stubbornly to reaffirm that this *is* possible, and that (contrary to what is implied by the experience of reading the text or texts) reading is *not* inevitably misreading.

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<sup>36</sup> Neither the 'Complaint' nor the first part of the 'Dialogue' (up to l. 252) survives in holograph; in Durham Cosin V.iii.9 the first quires were lost, and have been supplied in a copy by John Stow; given the existence of all other glosses in this holograph and the consistency of the glosses to the 'Complaint' and 'Dialogue' that appear in scribal copies Bodleian MSS Bodley 221, Laud misc. 735, Selden supra. 53, Beinecke MS 493, and Coventry City Record Office MS Acc. 325/1, it nonetheless seems reasonable to assume that these, too, are authorial.

But just as in the *Regiment*, there are a number of glosses that belie the possibility of a seamless transfer of meaning from text to text. The most striking of these occur at the point where the Friend asserts that ‘The wyf of Bathe take I for auctrice’ (‘Dialogue’, l. 694) and defends women’s ‘maistrie’ accordingly. His lines are accompanied by two Biblical glosses that stand in such a sophisticated relationship to the text that they really might have been provided by the Wife. Just as, in the *Canterbury Tales*, the Wife’s citation of Biblical examples is notoriously selective, the Friend too engages in a highly partial use of Scripture and literary authorities.<sup>37</sup> The first appears where the Friend offers in proof of women’s power the argument that God told Eve that she should break the serpent’s head, concluding:

Now, syn a woman had of the feend swich might;  
To breke a mannes heed / it seemeth light.

(ll. 727-8)

The Friend does acknowledge in passing that Eve is granted this power only because she was previously deceived by the snake, but the gloss reinforces the impression that Eve triumphs, affirming ‘Ait dominus ad serpentem / ipsa conteret caput tuum, &c’ [God said to the serpent, ‘She shall crush thy head, etc’].<sup>38</sup> Gloss and conclusion thus collude in a visibly partial interpretation of the story, reprising in a minor key the theme of misreading that characterizes the *Series* as a whole. So too does the following gloss, attached to the lines where the Friend argues that women’s

... reson axith haue of men maistrie  
Thogh holy writ wnesse and testifie

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<sup>37</sup> As a ‘glosing’ reader of the Bible, the Wife of Bath provoked further glossing from early readers of Chaucer, notably in BL MS Egerton 2684, where her readings are contested in the margins; conversely, in the Ellesmere manuscript, the glosses are largely sympathetic to the Wife. See further Clarke, *Chaucer and Italian Textuality*, pp. 136-51; Susan Schibanoff, ‘The New Reader and Female Textuality in Two Commentaries on Chaucer’, *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 10 (1988), 71-108; cf. also Heather Hill-Vásquez, ‘Chaucer’s Wife of Bath, Hoccleve’s Arguing Women, and Lydgate’s Hertford Wives: Lay Interpretation and the Figure of the Spinning Woman in Late Medieval England’, *Florilegium* 23 (2006), 173-7.

<sup>38</sup> Genesis 4.15. Hoccleve’s ‘ipsa’ reflects the version of the text found in the Vulgate; in the later Authorized Version Eve’s seed is what is predicted to bruise the serpent’s head.

Men sholde of hem han dominacioun,  
It is the revers in probacioun.

(ll. 732-5)

Here the gloss affirms that holy writ does indeed testify just that: ‘Sub viri potestate eris / & ipse dominabitur tui &c.’ [‘You shall be subject to man’s power and he shall have dominion over you, etc’].<sup>39</sup> It is emasculated, however, by being attached to lines where the Friend points out that its teaching has no effect in practice. Far from being an extra-textual authority guaranteeing the validity of the text, the text invokes the gloss only for the gloss’s inefficacy to be demonstrated. Moreover, its authority is further called into question by the way it appears alongside the words of the *Friend*, who is a demonstrably unreliable reader throughout the *Series*, and who at this point has invoked as his ultimate authority a fictional character notorious for her own misreadings of Scripture.<sup>40</sup> The mismatch is so extreme that it is impossible that a marginal citation – even a Biblical one – should stabilize the text; instead, it turns the very idea of stability into a joke.

The creative response to Chaucer that is in evidence in these two glosses arguably characterizes all of Hoccleve’s glossing. Chaucer is, of course, the writer whom Hoccleve explicitly claims as his ancestor in the *Regiment of Princes*, not only through the assertion that he was personally acquainted with him, but – in the earliest manuscripts – through the famous Chaucer portrait that accompanies this claim, and that functions as a kind of meta-gloss, invoking the personal presence of Chaucer as a means of guaranteeing the credentials of Hoccleve the writer.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, one possible model for Hoccleve’s first experiment in glossing, in the *Regiment*, is Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*.<sup>42</sup> Yet his glosses do not simply constitute a kind of

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<sup>39</sup> Genesis 3.16.

<sup>40</sup> For the Friend, see for example Sebastian Langdell, ‘“What World Is This? How Vndirstande Am I?” A Reappraisal of Poetic Authority in Thomas Hoccleve’s *Series*’, *Medium Ævum* 78 (2009), 281-299; Tim Machan, ‘Textual Authority and the Works of Hoccleve, Lydgate and Henryson’, *Viator* 23 (1992), 282-4; Patterson, ‘“What Is Me?”’, 453-61; and Watt, *Making of Hoccleve’s Series*, pp. 33-7.

<sup>41</sup> For contrasting readings of Hoccleve’s appeal to Chaucer, see Knapp, *Bureaucratic Muse*, pp. 107-27; Machan, ‘Textual Authority’, 284-5; and Patterson, ‘“What Is Me?”’, 465-6.

<sup>42</sup> Partridge, ‘Glosses in the Manuscripts of Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*’, 2.14.

formal imitation; rather, they draw attention to the instability of textual meaning in a way that is consonant with Chaucer's own interest in the problems inherent in *translatio* – a subject he addresses directly in the *House of Fame*, but which is close to the surface in all his dream visions, as well as in *Troilus and Criseyde*, and the *Canterbury Tales*. Whether in the narrator's struggles with his supposed source-text and Pandarus' opportunistic use of commonplaces in *Troilus*, in the constantly shifting narratorial perspectives in the *Canterbury Tales*, or the imaginative reworking of multiple source-texts in the dream visions, Chaucer consistently calls into question the possibility of the seamless transfer of meaning from text to text or from context to context, and it is this apprehension which Hoccleve in turn explores through his glossing.

Hoccleve's glossing thus witnesses one of the tensions at the heart of his writing. Although at first sight it may appear to imply that texts breed texts, untouched by human hand, it is also a visible sign that *translatio* is a form of appropriation rather than mere replication: the seemingly close correspondences between text and glosses are themselves a rhetorical strategy that is very much in Hoccleve's control. The kind of authorship they assert is therefore linked not to stable inheritance, but to process: to the ongoing business of writing and interpretation that the glosses both constitute and represent. One significant effect is the implicit substitution of Hoccleve's text for external sources as that which 'scriptum est', that of which a reader might say 'In bookes thus writen I fynde'. Yet this is not only enabling: rather, it leads to a noticeable anxiety that Hoccleve's own texts will necessarily be subject to an identical process of (mis)interpretation. Even as it makes a visual claim to authority, the very presence of glosses also tacitly acknowledges the power of the reader to construe or misconstrue. Glossing thus physically or materially demonstrates that a theoretical belief in textual stability and seamless *translatio* cannot stand up to the practice of writing; it modifies as well as expresses thinking about ownership and control of the text. The fullest expression of Hoccleve's poetics in his *Series*, which explores these questions through means other than glossing, does so by making the problem that is implicit in the earlier texts explicitly the question, and thus shows how glossing is key to Hoccleve's understanding of how texts (don't) work. The first conclusion that might be drawn, then, is that Hoccleve's glosses reveal a desire or

nostalgia for the seamless transfer of meaning even as they reveal that to be an impossibility.

There is a second possible conclusion, however, and this is a more radical one: namely, that Hoccleve's glosses not only emblemize his poetics, but are also a significant influence on them. In his reading of the *Series*, Matthew Clifton Brown connects Hoccleve's 'poetic obsession with ... the citation of generic forms and formulaic narratives' with his work for the Privy Seal, notably his *Formulary*. As Brown describes it, the main point about this 'large ... collection of exemplars or patterns, in French and Latin, for writs and letters of the type written and handled daily by employees of the Office of the Privy Seal' is that its exemplars are 'repeatable' or 'citable', because their 'signifying form is distinct from [their] particular act of inscription ... [allowing] them to be used autonomously, apart from their originating agency'.<sup>43</sup> For Brown, the *Series* is the result of applying an equivalent method of composition to poetry, as Hoccleve juxtaposes exercises in a range of pre-existing forms such as complaint, exemplary tale, and *ars moriendi*. It confirms that Hoccleve's muse is essentially a bureaucratic one. But the *Series* might additionally be considered as influenced by Hoccleve's previous *literary* practice: it is possible that, like the *Formulary*, his glosses too reveal the phenomenon of texts becoming separated from their origins and from the intentions of their authors – and that they thus inform the conspicuously experimental way in which the *Series* presents its author-narrator as at once a reader and the subject of others' reading. As well as aligning Hoccleve's writing with the formal experimentation engaged in by near-contemporaries such as Chaucer and Gower, they are a more personal enterprise: one of the ways in which Hoccleve's interest in the process by which texts come into being demonstrably affects how he thinks about his position as writer. His glosses thus reveal one of the ways in which literary theory is affected by literary practice.

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<sup>43</sup> Matthew Clifton Brown, '“Lo, Heer the Fourme”: Hoccleve's *Series*, *Formulary*, and Bureaucratic Textuality', *Exemplaria* 23 (2011), 27-49.