Developing a Protocol for Interpreting Medieval and Modern Orthography in the *Hoccleve Archive*'s Collaborative Transcription Project

Elon Lang
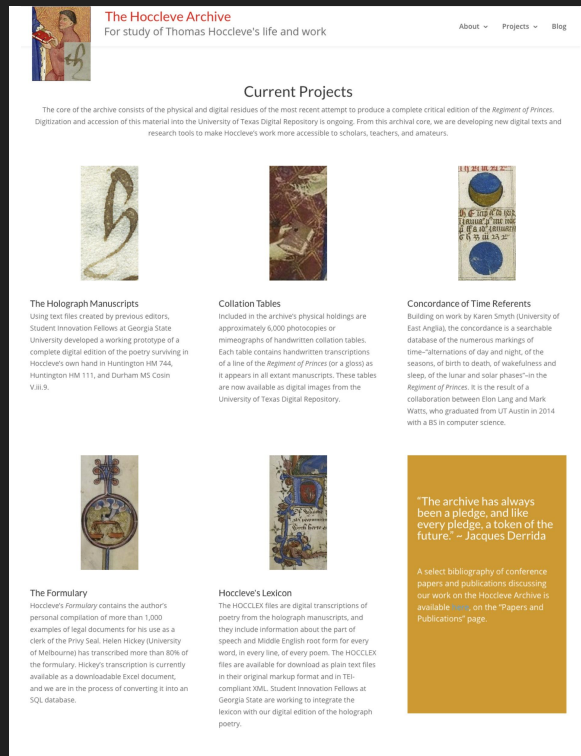Dylan McKibban

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The Hoccleve Archive hocclevearchive.org

Home to numerous digital, paper, and microfilm resources originating or derived from a defunct editorial project in the 1980s-90s to edit works of 15th-century London poet and Chaucer enthusiast, Thomas Hoccleve

Including ~6,000 physical pages of Variant Collation Tables for the book-length poem *The Regiment of Princes* that have been digitized and stored in the Texas ScholarWorks repository

The Hoccleve Archive
For study of Thomas Hoccleve's life and work

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Current Projects

The core of the archive consists of the physical and digital residues of the most recent attempt to produce a complete critical edition of the *Regiment of Princes*. Digitization and accession of this material into the University of Texas Digital Repository is ongoing. From this archival core, we are developing new digital texts and research tools to make Hoccleve's work more accessible to scholars, teachers, and amateurs.

The Holograph Manuscripts
Using text files created by previous editors, Student Innovation Fellows at Georgia State University developed a working prototype of a complete digital edition of the poetry surviving in Hoccleve's own hand in Huntington HM 744, Huntington HM 111, and Durham MS Cosin V.iii.9.

Collation Tables
Included in the archive's physical holdings are approximately 6,000 photocopies or mimeographs of handwritten collation tables. Each table contains handwritten transcriptions of a line of the *Regiment of Princes* (or a gloss) as it appears in all extant manuscripts. These tables are now available as digital images from the University of Texas Digital Repository.

Concordance of Time Referents
Building on work by Karen Smyth (University of East Anglia), the concordance is a searchable database of the numerous markings of time—alternations of day and night, of the seasons, of birth to death, of wakefulness and sleep, of the lunar and solar phases—in the *Regiment of Princes*. It is the result of a collaboration between Elon Lang and Mark Watts, who graduated from UT Austin in 2014 with a BS in computer science.

The Formulary
Hoccleve's *Formulary* contains the author's personal compilation of more than 1,000 examples of legal documents for his use as a clerk of the Privy Seal. Helen Hickey (University of Melbourne) has transcribed more than 80% of the formulary. Hickey's transcription is currently available as a downloadable Excel document, and we are in the process of converting it into an SQL database.

Hoccleve's Lexicon
The HOCCLEX files are digital transcriptions of poetry from the holograph manuscripts, and they include information about the part of speech and Middle English root form for every word, in every line, of every poem. The HOCCLEX files are available for download as plain text files in their original markup format and in TEI-compliant XML. Student Innovation Fellows at Georgia State University are working to integrate the lexicon with our digital edition of the holograph poetry.

"The archive has always been a pledge, and like every pledge, a token of the future." ~ Jacques Derrida

A select bibliography of conference papers and publications discussing our work on the Hoccleve Archive is available here, on the "Papers and Publications" page.

Collaborative Transcription of the Variant tables

http://bit.ly/fromthepageHA

# Transcription Protocol http://bit.ly/HAprotocol

Begin transcribing:

1. Change the "**Title**" of the page to the number of the corresponding line of the poem if it hasn't been done already. In the first set of tables (lines 1-112) the line number usually appears just to the left of the first word in the first typewritten line transcription. In the remaining tables, the line number usually appears in handwriting in the top right corner of each collation table page.

2. Navigate in your browser to the tab or window where you have opened the **Transcription Template** or **Glosses Template**.

3. **Copy** the entire contents of the appropriate template (Ctrl + A or Command +A, then Ctrl +C or Command + C). If you are transcribing a line of the poem, you will use the standard Transcription Template. If you are transcribing a gloss, use the Glosses Template.

4. Navigate in your browser back to the tab or window where you have opened the From the Page transcription workspace. **Paste** the template contents into the transcription area (Ctrl + V or Command + V).

5. Once this is done, you can begin to **transcribe** the document. Every word must be between two vertical bars (or "pipes") with a space between each, such as:

   | Hoccleve | is | a | friend | of | Chaucer |

c. Use foreslashes (/) to indicate **line breaks** when necessary.

d. When collator *only* writes '**nothing**' or '**out**' for a MS line, leave the spaces between the pipes on the template for that MS blank.

e. As usual, for **illegible words or letter groups**, transcribe your best guess in single square brackets [ ].

f. Some of the gloss collation pages may only reflect a portion of the collated manuscripts. If this is the case, delete lines pasted from the template that don't correspond to any MSs described on the corresponding page image. (The remaining MSs will likely be described on another page.)

Example Gloss Transcription for Line 2017, MS Ha1, Ha2, and Ha3:

Image:
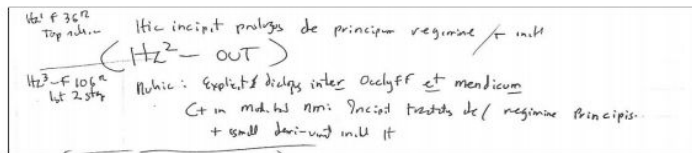
Transcription:

Ha1 | F36R | top rubric "Hic incipit prologus de principum regimine" + initl |

Ha2 | | |

Ha3 | F106R 1st 2 stanz | Rubric "Explicit dialogus inter Occlyff et mendicum" (+ in mod. hand RM: "Incipit [tractatus] de / regimine Principis." + [small demi - vinit] initl lt |

Improving Protocol and Structure

Keeping the role of the educators and students who will be using this protocol in mind, proposed changes for manuscript-based projects include:

- Addition of material on manuscript abbreviations in this time period or for known scribes as reference.
- Reevaluating steps in protocol that allow for idiosyncrasies within the transcription to occur. See step 15 on the possible inclusion of non-linguistic symbols.

- **Restructuring format of templates for two columns**
- **Moving from a "line across all mss" template approach to a manuscript leaf model.**

Arundel Ms. 38 left f.65, right f.52v, British Library