

Introduction (*i*)



- ✦ Arbitrariness and non-specialisation are frequent designations of mediaeval (and also Elizabethan) punctuation (Calle-Martin and Miranda-García 2008).
- ✦ The function of mediaeval punctuation is:
 - ✦ Rhetorical: providing the text with the necessary rest points for a meaningful oral performance.
 - ✦ Grammatical: structuring the elements within sentences, clauses and phrases.

Introduction (*ii*)



- ✦ Calle-Martín and Miranda-García (2004) distinguish three positions towards Middle English punctuation:
 - ✦ a) Mediaeval punctuation is exclusively rhetorical (Smith and Horobin 2002: 20).
 - ✦ b) Syntactic and elocutionary functions of punctuation may occasionally overlap (Lennard 1992: 68).
 - ✦ c) Each scribe would make a personal use of punctuation, depending on his own audience (Parkes 1978: 139).

Introduction (*iii*)



- ✦ The present paper has been conceived with the following objectives:
 1. To offer a description of the different uses and functions of punctuation symbols in Constantinus Africanus' *Venerabilis Anatomia*.
 2. To determine whether the scribe employed rhetoric or grammatical punctuation.

Methodology (i)



- ✦ Semi-diplomatic transcription of the witness.
- ✦ Tagging and lemmatising of every running word and punctuation mark in the witness.
- ✦ Automatic retrieval of linguistic information by means of *Text Search Engine* (Miranda-García and Garrido-Garrido 2013).

The text (*i*)

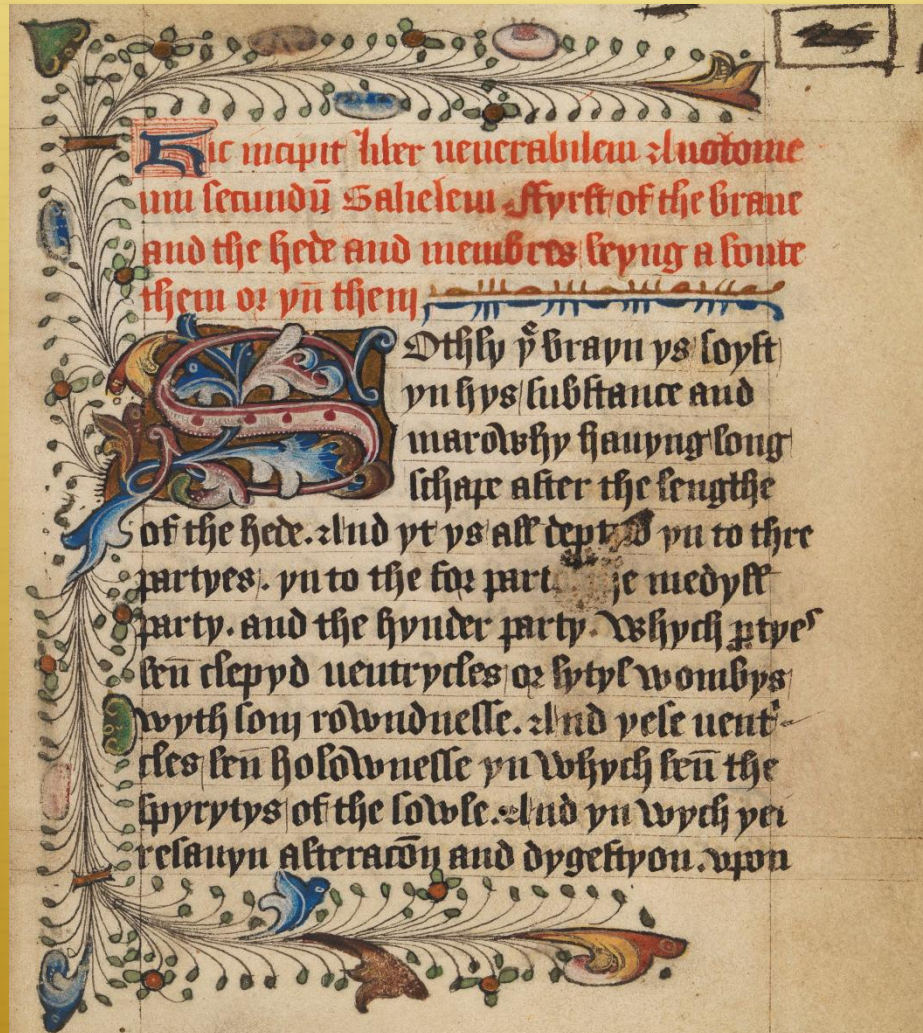


The source of evidence is MS Wellcome 290 (ff.1r-41v), housed in London, Wellcome Library.

It contains a Middle English translation of Constantinus Africanus' *Venerabilis Anatomia*.

This research stems from the *Málaga Corpus of Late Middle English Scientific Prose* (<http://hunter.uma.es>), which contains a collection of hitherto unedited late Middle English *Fachprosa* displaying the lemma, word-class, accidence and meaning of every running word in the corpus, punctuation marks also included.

The text (ii)



Analysis (*i*)



- ✦ Parkes (1992) offers the whole inventory of punctuation symbols: *punctus*, *punctus elevatus*, *punctus interrogatiuus*, *littera notabiliores*, *virgule*, *paragraph mark* and *positura*.
- ✦ The scribe of MS Wellcome 290, however, makes use of the *punctus* and the *paragraph mark*.

Analysis: the punctus (*i*)

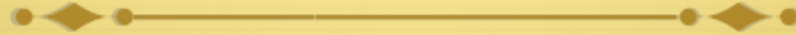


✦ The punctus is used with the following sentential functions:

1. To signal the end of a meaningful statement and the beginning of a new one:

✦ Fyrst of the brane and the hede and membres beyng aboute them or yne **them** . **Sothly** þe brayn ys soyft yn hys substance and marowhy hauyng long schape after the lengthe of the hede . (f. 1r).

Analysis: the punctus (*ii*)



2. To link coordinate clauses introduced by *and*, *but* and *nor*.
- ❖ Toward the share ys set þe bledder . whych ys þe vassyl of the vryn . and yt ys synewy . and the neke of yt ys fleshy os oft nost . and she hath yn hyr two cots the whych bene ij . skynnes . and þer be yn her many smale veynys and arteries . (f. 35r).
 - ❖ And the lung ys sett yn the same holounesse . but after hys beyng he loweth to the ryght syde . and yn the myddys of hym he boueth much to the left syde . (f. 26v).
 - ❖ and on the vpper ende he hath coueryng clepyd Epigloton þat þe tyme of etyng the mete entre not in hem . ne nothyng hurtyng but only eyre . or onythyng lyke to eyre . (f. 15r).

Analysis: the punctus (*iii*)



3. To make suggestions or recommendations to the reader:
- ❖ yf we make departyng bytwene þe rall and the **adiutorye . wet thow** wele þat all þe vaynes þat cummyn from þe lyuer abouyne bene depertyd fro the lesse branche of the gret vayn þat commyth þat cummyth fro the lyuer . and þat vayne ys deuydyd into iij branches . (f. 24r).

Analysis: the punctus (*iv*)



4. To introduce subordinate sentences:

- ✦ Under the hede yn that place yn þe hynder party ys . **Nucha . vnder whych** bene ordeyned vij spondels . whych bene vij Ioyntys of the neke . (f. 12v).
- ✦ and yt ys departyng of the noryshyng membrys fro þe spyritual . and yt ys clepyd **diafragma . þat** ys *in* englych the myddref . and he holdyth hys place lyke the schape of a bely yn that worchyng . (f. 33r).
- ✦ þe cordys mouyng þe arme be de-partyd after diuers partys . And yn the arme ys anoþer open beyng wythoute þe arme . *and* be spredyth þe arme **aboute . of whom** bene deperted diuersse stryng mouyng þe fyngurs (f. 21r).

Analysis: the punctus (v)



5. To introduce a non-finite form of the verb:

- ❖ Sothly the arteryes þat *commen* to the forsayd skyn and to the brest .
commen by *branchyng* of a **branche** . **depertyng** from a grete arterye
. the whych growyth in the lyfte ere . of the herte . (f. 28r).

Analysis: the punctus (*vi*)



6. To introduce a sequential marker:

- ❖ by the kuttyng or *persyng* yn suche placis *commeth* noysaunce or hurtyng to the dura mater of the **brayne** . **Therefore** be þer nor worchyng wyth yrene in such places yf yt be possible to be eschuyd . (f. 4r).
- ❖ hauyng her begynnyn^g of Nucha . or of the spondels of the **breſt** . **wherfore** yt schewyth opynly how and yn what maner þat þe apostumes of þese places schulde be kut . (f. 28v).

Analysis: the punctus (*viii*)

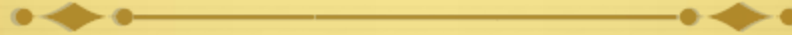


The period is also employed at clausal level:

1. To mark technical terms within the treatise, anatomical terms in particular:

- ❖ and ys fastned wyth the throte *with* the pype of longes **clepyd** .
Trachea arteria . whych ys made of gristles of the vjth payer of synews of the brayn . and yt ys greyny . and hath lytyl hoopess yn the vtter party of the fastnyng wyth the meryngg of the pype of the stomake . (f. 15r).

Analysis: the punctus (*ix*)



2. To circumscribe numerals:

- ❖ Ther ben **þen xij . rybbys** whych ben fastened **with . xij . spondelys** . and þese spondelys ben clepyd *properly* the spondys of the brest . the remnaunt of the spondels that **ben . v . ben** clepyd the spondels of the reynes . **whych . xij . rybbys** ben bowed yn the maner of a halfe compas . of the **whych . vij . of** the *hynder* endys ben fastned wyth the spondelys of the bake . (f. 25v).

3. To add extra information:

- ❖ the skynne . *koueryng* the skul . and thys skynne ys made harde . and ys hauyng hymselfe **lytyl flech . not wele sygthty** . (f. 6v).

Analysis: the punctus (*x*)



Finally, the punctus also features a phrasal function to join the head and its complement:

- ✦ And forthi þe wondys of þis place be ful dredeful . and vncurable for þe most *pertye* . for the **ende . of þe vttermore partyes of þe veynes** . (f. 40v).

Analysis: the paragraph mark (*i*)

The paragraph mark is employed to mark an important section:

❖ the branche þat ys the iijde . of the vnknown veynys yn the ryght ere of the forsayd **hert** ¶ **Sothly** the arteryes þat *commen* to the forsayd skyn and to the brest . *commen* by *branchyng* of a branche . *depertyng* from a grete arterye . (f. 28r).

Analysis: the paragraph mark (*ii*)

In addition, it shares some of the sentential functions of the punctus, such as:

1. The introduction of coordinate sentences:

❖ Ne thys vpper or herder pannycle ys not conteyned wyth the bone of the brayn panne . lest yt take *commone* hurtyng for þe herdnesse of **hyt** ¶ **But** wyth som ioynters medelyng of the skul . by whych the clothy bynedyng . (f. 3v).

2. The introduction of subordinate sentences:

❖ And benethe þese bones anenste the vpper chawel ys a grete hole . whych ys clepyd peterosum . and yt ys to sey ful herde and stony . whych ys the substance of the bone . **mendoza** ¶ **By** whych passyth the synewe of heryng . here ben therfore nowmbred . vj bonys *comprehendyng* the brayne . (f. 5v).

Analysis: the paragraph mark (*iii*)

3. The introduction of a sequential marker:

❖ whan þese synews entren the makyng of the muscles mouyng þese **pertyes** ¶ **Therefore** yt accordyth . þat the kutting þat be done or owen to be done yn the place of the vpper chanel . *and* of the nose . (f. 10v).

4. The introduction of suggestions or recommendations:

❖ Therefore be þer nor worchyng wyth yrene in such places yf yt be possible to be **eschuyd** ¶ **Ferthermore** wete thou wele that the brayn yn the formar *pertye* vnder þe bone of the forhede hath ij . addicyons lyke hedys of bygg yn the whych þe worchyng and þe vertue of smellyng ys fulfyllyd . (f. 4r).

Conclusions



1. The punctuation system in Constantinus Africanus' *Venerabilis Anatomia* is grammatical.
2. The use of the punctus is almost exclusively sentential, with sporadic instances at clausal and phrase level.
3. The use of the paragraph mark is exclusively sentential.
4. While some of the functions of the punctuation marks are exclusively expressed with the punctus or the paragraph mark, other functions may be rendered with both symbols.
 - ✦ The introduction of coordinate sentences, subordinate sentences, sequential markers and suggestions to the reader.

Thank you!



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