

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE PUNCTUATION OF THE MIDDLE ENGLISH
LETTER OF IPOCRAS IN LONDON, WELLCOME LIBRARY, MS 405¹**

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ABSTRACT. *Punctuation in early English has been traditionally considered to lack consistency and systematicity, as shown in the relevant literature. Yet, recent research has uncovered that individual texts followed particular punctuation practices regarding signs and functions that were relatively systematic and consistent, even if they were also quite frequently text-based. In line with this, the present article explores the punctuation practice found in a copy of the Middle English medical text called Letter of Ipocras, the one held in London, Wellcome Library, MS 405. This contribution first reviews research on punctuation practices in Middle English texts and discusses the functions that historical punctuation has been reported to perform. Then, a cursory description of both the manuscript and the text is offered. Next, the punctuation signs found in the text are described and discussed, and their various functions at different levels illustrated with the help of examples. The article closes with a reflection on the global function of the pointing practice of the text, which veers towards the grammatical and pragmatic functions.*

Keywords: Middle English, medieval manuscripts, MS Wellcome 405, *Letter of Ipocras*, punctuation, function.

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ANÁLISIS DE LA PUNTUACIÓN DE LA *LETTER OF IPOCRAS* EN INGLÉS MEDIO EN EL MANUSCRITO LONDRES, WELLCOME LIBRARY, MS 405

RESUMEN. *La puntuación en inglés temprano se ha considerado poco consistente y sistemática, tal y como muestra la literatura disponible sobre el tema. Sin embargo, investigaciones recientes han mostrado que textos concretos muestran prácticas de puntuación específicas que son relativamente sistemáticas y consistentes en cuanto a los signos y las funciones de estos, si bien dichas prácticas son propias de cada texto. En este sentido, este artículo se detiene en la puntuación de una copia en inglés medio del texto conocido como Letter of Ipcoras, la recogida en el manuscrito Londres, Wellcome Library, MS 405. Así, este artículo revisa, en primer lugar, la investigación realizada hasta el momento sobre la puntuación en inglés medio y discute las funciones que se han atribuido comúnmente a la puntuación histórica. A continuación, se describen tanto el códice como el texto objeto de estudio. Posteriormente, se analizan los signos de puntuación presentes en el texto y las funciones que estos desempeñan a cada nivel, apoyadas en ejemplos. El artículo concluye con una reflexión sobre la función de la puntuación en el texto en términos globales, que está orientada hacia las funciones gramatical y pragmática.*

Palabras clave: inglés medio, manuscritos medievales, MS Wellcome 405, *Letter of Ipcoras*, puntuación, función.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Historical punctuation in English has been traditionally disregarded on account of its haphazardness and inconsistency. Such judgement was mainly based on the unsystematicity of punctuation (Jenkinson 1926: 153) and on the overlapping functions that the signs displayed (Lucas 1971: 19). To these claims, authors like Zeeman added that the medieval punctuation system does not match the contemporary one (1956: 11). Petti summarises clearly the main issues regarding English medieval punctuation when stating that the repertoire of signs changed greatly up to the 17th century, “[b]ut even then, punctuation was somewhat haphazardly applied in manuscripts and the significance of a given mark varied almost as frequently as spelling did” (1977: 25). That said, he goes on to remark that “punctuation was not however entirely chaotic in the period” (1977: 25).

After having been neglected for a long time, the study of medieval punctuation has gained momentum over the last decades, especially following the contributions by Arakelian (1975) and Lucas (1971). Some years later, Parkes’ comprehensive study of the punctuation in Western texts (1992) helped to raise awareness of

the importance of pointing practices. Recent studies on individual texts (most of them of scientific nature), like those by Rodríguez-Álvarez (1999), Alonso Almeida (2002), Calle-Martín (2004), Calle-Martín and Miranda-García (2005), Obegi Gallardo (2006), Esteban-Segura (2009), Marqués-Aguado (2009, 2011), and de la Cruz Cabanillas (2014, 2016), have laid bare that medieval punctuation is to a certain extent idiosyncratic, since each text shows a particular inventory of signs, the latter of which display in turn specific uses. This, nonetheless, does not hinder certain regularity. Despite this growing interest in medieval punctuation, Horobin still states that we “lack detailed studies of individual punctuation practices, as well as a clear diachronic overview of developments in usage” (2016: 126), including both literary and non-literary practices (2016: 124).

Two are the key aspects scrutinised concerning medieval punctuation in the relevant literature: its function and its possible modernisation. We will only focus on the former, insofar as a discussion of the latter lies beyond the scope of this article.² Historical punctuation has been commonly shown to perform rhetorical (i.e. signalling rest points for oral delivery) or grammatical (that is, marking syntactic relations) functions – the latter of which, Petti remarks, was fully assumed during the 18th century (1977: 25). Lucas added a third function, the macro-textual one (1971), according to which punctuation helped to signal the layout of texts. In the last few years, a new approach has emerged, that of the “visual pragmatics’ [...] of anything on the page that adds meaning to the linguistic message” (Carroll, Peikola, Salmi, Varila, Skaffari and Hiltunen 2013: 56); that is, the pragmatic functions that palaeographic and codicological traits like the use of colours or punctuation perform, thus contributing to “the reader’s construal of meaning” (Carroll, Peikola, Salmi, Varila, Skaffari and Hiltunen 2013: 55). The discourse functions analysed in this approach have been classified at textual, interactional and stance levels, which designate organisational patterns, addressee issues and “authors’ expressions of their evaluative judgements”, respectively (Carroll, Peikola, Salmi, Varila, Skaffari and Hiltunen 2013: 64).³

In the light of this, the present article analyses the punctuation practice of the *Letter of Ipcras* held in London, Wellcome Library, MS 405 (ff. 21v-40v).⁴ For the purpose, a cursory manuscript and text description is first provided; then, the account of the punctuation repertoire is presented. The article closes with a discussion that brings together the uses found to globally assess the pointing practice of the text.

² The issue of the modernisation of medieval punctuation has not escaped debate either, with scholars like Moorman (1975: 85) or Hudson (1977: 50-51) opposing editorial modernisation for various reasons.

³ See also Rogos-Hebda (2016).

⁴ This text forms part of *The Málaga Corpus of Late Middle English Scientific Prose* (Miranda García, Calle Martín, Moreno Olalla, González Fernández Corugedo and Caie 2007-2014), which is a lemmatised and tagged corpus compiled on the basis of transcriptions of late Middle English scientific texts available at <http://hunter.uma.es>.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE MANUSCRIPT AND THE TEXT

MS Wellcome 405 (hereafter, W405) is a medical miscellany that collects recipes, charms and prognostications in English and in Latin (Moorat 1962: 273). Despite not being listed in Ker's catalogue of the Wellcome Collection, which gathered only "some texts of special interest and [...] all texts which are not medical or scientific" (1969: 393), W405 has been included in Keiser's *Manual* (1998) and in Voigts and Kurtz's database (2000, 2014).⁵ It has also been the focus of study of Edmar's work, which offers a concise MS description of the codex (1967: 1-5) that barely mentions important palaeographic aspects like punctuation.

W405 is an anonymous MS that can be dated back to the early 15th century (Moorat 1962: 272; Edmar 1967: 16). It contains no marks of ownership or signatures (except for Wellcome's), which increases the uncertainty as to the circulation of the codex, although some insights can be gained thanks to a 19th-century letter that accompanies W405 and that was sent from the Very Reverend George William Kitchin to "My dear Jeffrey", possibly a Scottish antiquarian (Edmar 1967: 2). The next known owners of W405, Edmar indicates, are Mears, Davis and Orioli, from whom Sir Henry Wellcome acquired the codex in 1922 (1967: 2; see also Moorat 1962: 273). In his letter, Kitchin commented on the contents, date and dialect of the text, which he believed to have been written approximately in 1360-1370 in the East Anglia area (Moorat 1962: 273).

W405 is a sixteenmo, a size that allows us to speculate on the MS having been used as a portable vademecum by a medical practitioner. That it was not conceived as a quality copy is reinforced by the lack of decoration (with the exception of red and blue, which are used for rubrications, and some punctuation marks) and by the absence of homogeneous margins and of ruling – according to de Hamel, "unruled manuscript [...] are the cheap and ugly home-made transcripts" (1992: 20-21).

The binding is modern, and so is the foliation, which was probably inserted around the time when the codex was rebound owing to the modern shape of the numerals. The material of the flyleaves, which were used to protect the codex, is paper rather than parchment – the material used to render the text instead. This change of material and the fact that no information is written on the flyleaves (a typical location for marks of ownership, scribbled tables of contents, etc.) may suggest that these are contemporary to the modern binding. Another modern trait of the codex is the use of pieces of paper to restore the torn corners of some damaged folios (e.g. ff. 2 and 3).

⁵ W405 was not initially included in the *Index of Middle English Verse* (Brown and Robbins 1943), which registered, however, another witness with the same incipit (number 1605). It is now catalogued in the *Digital Index of Middle English Verse* (Mooney, Mosser, Solopova, Thorpe and Radcliffe), where the text under scrutiny is assigned number 2688 (<http://www.dimev.net/Records.php?MSS=Wellcome405>).

Various hands intervene in the rendering of W405 (Moorat 1962: 272). Moorat classifies the one in the first 40 folios as a gothic book hand. More specifically, the script used in ff. 7r-40r is text (semiquadrata), which is described by Petti as “usually [having] the lozenge serifs at the head but not at the feet, which generally end in a slight angle, hook or curl” (1977: 13). Edmar uses palaeographic and linguistic evidence to hypothesise that three scribes might have been engaged in copying the text in ff. 21v-40v, with breaks in f. 32v and the middle of f. 38r (1967: 2-3), but concludes that the arguments against outweigh those in favour. It will be interesting to assess whether punctuation can shed some light on this matter.

The text under analysis is the so-called *Letter of Ipcras* (hereafter, *LI*), found in ff. 21v to 40v in W405 (see Keiser 2003 and Tavormina 2007).⁶ The textual tradition of the *LI* is attested not only in the English vernacular, but also in Latin and French. In fact, according to Hunt, the *LI* is of Anglo-Norman origin and “was the most influential collection of vernacular medical recipes before 1300” (1990: 100). Despite its importance, no systematic account of all the texts, textual traditions or recipes has been carried out to date, as Hunt (1990: 100) and Tavormina (2007: 633) remark. Nonetheless, individual work on certain witnesses has been conducted, and, in this line, the copy in W405 – or rather parts of it –, has been recently acknowledged to present differences that are substantial enough as to consider it worthy of setting up a different textual family (Keiser 2003: 313; Tavormina 2007: 634).

Regarding its structure, and quoting Hunt, “The ‘Lettre d’Hippocrate’ is an unsophisticated work. It begins with a short introduction [...] and continues with a more extended treatment of urines [...]. There follows a corpus of receipts arranged in the traditional manner *a capite ad calcem*” (1990: 100). Tavormina’s description is more precise, as the *LI* is said to include a prologue that invokes the authority of Hippocrates, a humoural tract, a uroscopy containing a description of six types of urines, and a recipe collection, although “there is a good deal of fluidity in the shape and content of the *Letter*” (2007: 633). The structure of the *LI* in W405 replicates this pattern. After the invocation to Hippocrates and the humoural tract (ff. 21v-22v) comes a brief description of the treatment of six urines – it barely occupies ff. 22v to 23v –. Then follows the recipe collection, and the last folios gather a section in Latin (ff. 37v and 38r) and a recipe to prepare a drink of Antioche (ff. 38v-40v).

⁶ The online Wellcome Catalogue labels it as a pseudo-Hippocratic text (<http://archives.wellcomelibrary.org/Dserve/dserve.exe?dsqIni=Dserve.ini&dsqApp=Archive&dsqCmd=Show.tcl&dsqDb=Catalog&dsqPos=0&dsqSearch=%28%28AltRefNo%3D%27ms%27%29AND%28AltRefNo%3D%27405%27%29%29>).

3. ANALYSIS OF THE PUNCTUATION SYSTEM

The punctuation repertoire of ff. 21v-40r is fairly restricted, as only three signs are employed: the cross, the paragraph mark and the *punctus* (see Fig. 1). Such a reduced inventory hints at each sign displaying a variety of uses at different levels:

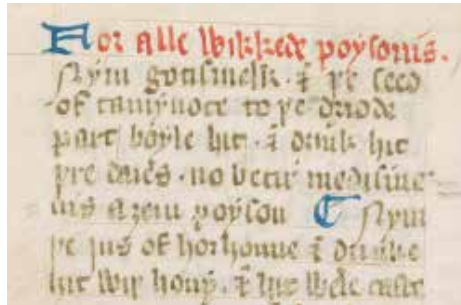


Fig. 1. Sample of punctuation signs (f. 31v). (The Wellcome Collection and Library are thanked for granting permission to reproduce this image).

In this section we will analyse separately the contexts in which each sign appears, and attention will be paid to the uses and function(s) these marks serve.

3.1. THE CROSS

Two crosses are found in the *LI*, both of which are rendered in blue, a visual cue that makes them stand out on the page. Initials in blue follow both occurrences, too.

What particularly calls our attention is the context of these two occurrences, which are located in f. 37v, in the passage in Latin (ff. 37v-38r). Yet, the use of the cross does not seem to be conditioned by the language in which the text is written, but rather by the type of text, as both instances visually mark off the group of words that is typically used to cross oneself, as shown in (1) below:⁷

⁷ The examples offered to illustrate the various uses of the punctuation signs are taken from the transcription of the text available at the corpus site. Following the conventions of the corpus, the original punctuation and line division are preserved, along with spelling (including specific letters like thorn, the positionally-conditioned alternation of <u> and <v>, and so on) and capitalisation. Italics stand for expanded abbreviations. The only change implemented with respect to the online transcription is the use of underlining whenever colours (red or blue) are used, and of bold to mark the relevant punctuation and context under scrutiny.

(1) letuse oft **+ In** nomine patris
 et . Filis . et . Spirito . Sancto . Amen Per crucis hoc sig
 num et cetera Et per idem et cetera per signum
 scem **crucis +** Beata appo (f. 37v)

Further evidence from W405 that supports the claim that the use of the cross is motivated by presence of a prayer-related element (although also in Latin) comes from ff. 7r and 7v, where other occurrences of this sign, in either blue or red, are attested in the rendering of a similar string of words (aimed at crossing oneself). Therefore, the cross seems to serve a purpose that goes beyond the grammatical/rhetorical function, even when it helps to mark syntactic boundaries. Looked from the ‘visual pragmatics’ point of view, the function of marking off prayer-related elements can be located at textual level in Carroll, Peikola, Salmi, Varila, Skaffari and Hiltunen’s terminology (2013: 58-63), as it is related to the signalling of organisational patterns.

3.2. THE PARAGRAPH MARK

There is a total of 30 paragraph marks in the *LI*. As with the crosses, they stand out on the page owing to the use of blue ink. 10 of these paragraph marks are preceded by *puncti*, but we have not considered these sequences of two signs as a single punctuation symbol since the paragraph mark on its own may also perform the same uses (e.g. separating independent sentences and/or separating independent ideas), as shown in the examples below and further discussed in section 3.3. The distribution of these sequences is also relevant: although in most cases the signs follow one another in the same line (8×), whether in line-final (3×) or medial (5×) position, they also appear in different lines (2×, in ff. 22r and 24r), which reinforces their being considered two different signs.

Petti claimed that the paragraph mark was an indicator of the beginning of a new heading, book or chapter (1977: 27), and Parkes later on argued that it signalled a new section (1992: 44), a use that Carroll, Peikola, Salmi, Varila, Skaffari and Hiltunen agree on calling “shifting, or initiating, function” (2013: 60). Similar views on this widespread function of the paragraph mark are shown in the studies by Calle-Martín and Miranda-García (2005: 33), Esteban-Segura (2009: 102) or de la Cruz Cabanillas (2014: 152). Such statements indicate that the function of this sign goes beyond marking syntactic units to reflect the organisation of the text into different units. This is especially evident with the paragraph marks in ff. 21v, 22v and 23v (totalling 4×; see (2) below), which separate the prologue, the tract on humours, the urines section and the compilation of recipes – the

four structural components of the *LI*. These, of course, overlap with syntactic boundaries, but the grammatical function is not the prevalent one here. It is also remarkable that these paragraph marks are followed by capital letters (rather than by lower-case letters, as in other instances), a visual cue that reinforces the division into sections (see also de la Cruz Cabanillas 2016: 22).⁸ This evinces that the paragraph mark helps to separate sections, hence performing a pragmatic function at textual level:

(2) of eueri gras . þat schewid
was to ýpocras . ¶ Now
loke þeron wiþ gode wil . eueri
man. Boþe lowde and stille best ||
and brid . bodyes þen (ff. 21v-22r)

The other instances of the paragraph mark are also important at the macro-textual or organisational level, even if they simultaneously contribute to signalling syntactic relations at sentence level. In ff. 22r, 23r and 23v (that is, in the tract on humours and the uroscopy) the paragraph mark indicates a new idea or item being put forward (6×), thus also separating independent sentences. For instance, those in ff. 23r and 23v mark off the different types of urines in the uroscopy, as shown in (3). Some of them are preceded by *puncti* (see also 3.3. below):

(3) he be with childe . ¶ vryne
of wommen þat is as gold cler
and hem . bý tokneþ þat wommen
haþ wil to man . ¶ vryne
of man or of womman . þat (f. 23r)

In the recipe collection, the paragraph mark is used 17× in very specific contexts (which are also discussed by Marqués-Aguado 2009: 59 and 2011: 67): 7 instances signal the beginning of new recipes, which commonly start with a rubricated title, as in (4);⁹ and the remaining 10 occurrences precede an alternative remedy or an alternative application of the medical preparation. Most of these 10× are coordinated clauses beginning with ‘other’/‘or’, as shown in (5), although some NP are also attested, as in (6), so that the paragraph mark also shows grammatical functions. It is worth mentioning that these two uses in the recipe collection do

⁸ Size is another method reviewed by Carroll, Peikola, Salmi, Varila, Skaffari and Hiltunen regarding visual cues (2013: 57).

⁹ The rubricated titles in W405 typically make reference to the purpose of the remedy given next. This is one of the recipe elements Stannard analyses regarding the types of information of recipes, also called *Fachinformation* (1982).

not co-occur in the same folios of the text, since the use of separating recipes is only present up to f. 28r, while the presentation of alternatives begins in f. 30v. Moreover, no paragraph mark is found after f. 37v, which is a remarkable detail as to the distribution of this sign:

(4) *and* hit schal
make þi mouþ clene ¶ **ffor**
ache of teep Schauē þe her
tishorn . *and* boyle hit wel in apot (f. 27v)

(5) Tempre þe
crowmis of wette bred *with*
water *and* wit gleȝer of an
eȝ *and* leȝ þer vp on *and* it cha | |
le it clewe for rankle of blo
delest binde þe leuis of þe
rede wortis ¶ **Or nim** hok
kis *and* þe rinde of withi *and*
boȝle it *in* win *and* do þer on
wel hote for wat maner
gowt þu wilt (ff. 34r-34v)

(6) Or
nim fresche chese *and* seþ
hit wel *in* rede win or *in*
water *and* ȝif him to ete
¶ **Or þe heued of þe crane** | |
and þe fet *and* þe guttis *and* do
hit to drie inan euen
for to þou mow make
poudre þer of (ff. 32v-33r)

The remaining three occurrences of the paragraph mark signal a new sentence (2×), as in (7), where it also marks the next step in the preparation of a remedy; and the enumeration of clausal elements, as shown in (8). As the examples illustrate, these paragraph marks also flag medical information:

(7) *and* ȝif he
caste hit noȝt men mowe
hem hele ¶ **After þat ȝif him**
euerday þre grasēs *temperit*
to gedere wit altil ale (f. 33r)

(8) þat oþer to
þe wombe ¶ **þe dridde to**

þe spleýn . þe ferþe to þe
bladdre (f. 22v)

In sum, although this mark performs a variety of uses, all of them can be explained through the pragmatic function of punctuation, as it works at textual level to organise the text and to highlight important medical information (recipes, sequencing of steps, alternatives, etc.). The grammatical function is also served alongside the pragmatic one in many cases, but not as the predominant one.

3.3. THE PUNCTUS

The *punctus* is used 266x, a frequency that makes it, by far, the most common sign in the *LI*. The same sign has been found to be the most frequent one of the repertoires explored in the studies by Obegi Gallardo (2006: 103) or Esteban-Segura (2009: 96). Compared to the other two punctuation signs, the *punctus* shows a broader range of uses. In fact, the relevant literature (e.g. Arakelian 1975: 620; Brown 1990: 8; Calle-Martín and Miranda-García 2005: 37-38; or Marqués-Aguado 2011: 58) has stressed that the *punctus* had a wide variety of functions. Zeeman paid special attention to its various grammatical uses, including those at sentential, clausal and phrasal levels (1956: 14), while for Hector the *punctus* had “other purposes besides punctuation” that comprised marking abbreviations and separating numerals and *siglae* off the rest of the text (1966: 46).

For the sake of clarity, the uses of the *punctus* will be analysed taking into consideration the sections of the *LI* (prologue, tract on humours, uroscopy and recipe collection) where they appear, since some differences can be put down only to content (e.g. some uses related to recipes are, obviously, only spotted in the recipe collection).

Before analysing the instances of the *punctus*, a comment needs to be added on its co-occurrence with the paragraph mark. As already discussed in section 3.2, some *puncti* are followed by paragraph marks, including 2x that separate sections, as shown in example (2) above. In these cases the *punctus* seems to put an end to the preceding section. The same use (i.e. separating sections) applies in the other contexts where the two marks co-occur: the separation of different ideas (see (11) below); the end of an item within the urines section, as in (3) above twice; and the end of a recipe, as shown in (20) below.

The *punctus* performs a variety of uses in the first three sections of the *LI*, many of which veer towards the grammatical function:

- a) To enclose a parenthetical comment that helps to specify (3 pairs of *puncti* and one isolated *punctus*), as in (9) (see also Marqués-Aguado 2011: 61).

Rodríguez-Álvarez also notes that this function may be served by just one sign rather than by a pair (1999: 39):

(9) þei
mowen knowen . **and** **namelich**
body of man. for he is makid.
after adam. (f. 22r)

- b) To coordinate clauses (5×), as in (10), which is one of the functions most frequently noticed in the literature (e.g. Rodríguez-Álvarez 1999: 34; Esteban-Segura 2009: 96; Marqués-Aguado 2009: 64 and 2011: 62, 69; or de la Cruz Cabanillas 2014: 145, among others). These clauses, nonetheless, may also signal steps in the preparation of the remedy. Thus, the *punctus* also contributes to signal functions at the textual and interactional levels:

(10) bi
tokneþ goud hele . **and** **panne**
schulle 3e wel knowe alle þe
vrynes . of oure bodyes . **And**
whanne þu hast hem knowe
fele þingis þu most lere. (f. 23v)

- c) To separate independent (but related) clauses (5×), as in (11), which also features a paragraph mark to separate ideas and introduce this four-item listing:

(11) sekuliche.
¶ þat on is hot . **þat oþer is**
cold . **þe dridde is** drie . **þe**
ferþe is moist. (f. 22r)

- d) To coordinate phrase components (1×) or to link phrase components (2×), as shown in (10) above, with a *punctus* between the head noun (“vrynes”) and the dependent *of*-phrase (“of oure bodyes”).

In turn, other uses of the *punctus* that are attested across the whole LI are the following ones:

- a) To separate sentences (13×), as illustrated in (12) below. As also commented in section 3.2, some of the items in the urines sections are separated by both a *punctus* and a paragraph mark, as shown in (3) above:

(12) *and* drink hit
 þre daies . **no betir medicine**
nis aȝein poȝson (f. 31v)

- b) To separate main from subordinate clauses (25×), including relative clauses (as in (13)) and also adverbial clauses that indicate time (when something needs to be done, as in (14)), purpose (as in (15)), condition, cause, etc. Some of these, again, illustrate medical procedures or explanations. This is another function that is typically (though not exclusively) linked to the *punctus*, as the studies surveyed show (e.g. Rodríguez-Álvarez 1999: 36; Calle-Martín and Miranda-García 2005: 39; Esteban-Segura 2009: 96-97; Marqués-Aguado 2009: 64 and 2011: 63, 69; and de la Cruz Cabanillas 2014: 146-147):

(13) *and* do hit
to his erin Ore þe jus of
wermod . **þat wele amendi þi**
heringe Ore þe jus of walwort
þat makip̃ goud heringe . (f. 28v)

(14) *and* boyle
hit in apot . **forte hit is half**
ýwastid . *and* sete hit (f. 27r)

(15) *and* do hit to his nose
terlis . **þat he haue wel þe**
smel . *and* make (f. 23v)

- c) To separate clause components. This function (also performed by the *punctus* in the texts studied by Esteban-Segura 2009: 101; Marqués-Aguado 2009: 64 and 2011: 63, 70; or de la Cruz Cabanillas 2014: 148, among others) is attested 24× across the *LI*, 6× of which are found within the uroscopy section to precede systematically the verb “bitōknen” (6×), which lexically introduces the disease or health problem, as shown in (16), thus signalling important medical information. Another example is provided in (17), where the prepositional phrases headed by “in” are marked off by *puncti*:

(16) vrýne
of wommen þenne . *and* whit
zif hit is . wiþ inne þe vrýne
þat is brygt as siluer . **þý tok-**
neþ for to keste . *and* no wil
haue to mete . **bi tokniþ** þat
he be with childe . (f. 23r)

(17) oþer boyle
þe rote of þe rede coul . **in clene**
water of þe welle to þe hal

uendel . *and* þere wiþ wassche þine
 heuid . **inbaþ** . (f. 29v)

- d) To coordinate (9×) or to enumerate (2×) phrases, as shown in (18) and (19), the first of which also contains examples of coordinated prepositional phrases that are not punctuated. Coordinating and listing are also mentioned as functions of the punctus in several studies surveyed (e.g. Marqués-Aguado 2009: 64 and 2011: 64; or de la Cruz Cabanillas 2014: 148, among others):

(18) *and* make abait of mariole at
 þe bottem . **and of ache** *and* of gro
 oundeswilie *and* of lemke . **and of**
ýsope . and of houndistunge heý
 hone . (f. 30r)

(19) þat hit wolde
 helpe eueri **man . Wif and child** (f. 21v)

As with the paragraph mark, the *punctus* is used in the recipe collection section to separate recipes (22×) and to introduce an alternative recipe (1×), among other uses (see also Marqués-Aguado 2009: 64 and 2011: 60, 67), hence displaying pragmatic functions at textual level. As for the separation of recipes, we find cases of *puncti* before a paragraph mark and the rubricated title of the following recipe (2×) and of *puncti* before a rubricated title (17×), both of which are exemplified in (20); and also of *puncti* not followed by rubricated titles or paragraph marks at all (3×; see (21)). Both (20) and (22) show that the *punctus* may also be used to put an end to titles of recipes (28×). Notwithstanding, these practices are not fully systematic: some recipes lack a final punctuation mark, as shown in (22) after “helpe him”, and so do some recipe titles (see the second “Anoþer” in (20)):

(20) tille
 hit be hol . **Anoþer**. Ným
 rewe *and* tempre hit wiþ strong
 eýsel *and* þere wiþ smere wel
 þyne heuid a bouen. **Anoþer** | |
 Boýle wel fenel *and* þer wiþ
 wassche wel þýne heued. ¶
For alle achis of þe heuid
 Nime þe mole leuis (ff. 25r-25v)

(21) *and* 3if hit
 him to drinke a morwe *and* an
 eue . *and* hit schal hele him for soþe.
Ným þe sed of ache *and* of mynte

and of pepir *and* of honý *with* alitel
wine . *and* tempre hit to gedere . (f. 30v)

(22) *and* hit wole helpe him

For þe feuer quartaïn.

Nim þe plauntes (f. 36v)

Yet, the most frequent use of the *punctus* within the recipe collection is to mark the coordination of clauses, a function mentioned above. Most of these occurrences reflect the steps in the preparation of a remedy (78x; see for instance (4) (“*and boyle*”), (17) (“*and þere wiþ wassche*”) or (21) (“*and tempre hit*”) above, and also (23) below). This linguistic trait is linked to the features of recipes: as Taavitsainen puts forward (2001: 98-100), recipes are characterised by series of short clauses with a verb in the imperative that are coordinated by means of “*and*” – also called paratactic style (Carroll 1999: 31). In pragmatic terms, this is connected to the textual and interactional levels, insofar as the *punctus* organises the text but also guides the reader through the procedure by marking the subsequent steps:

(23) Ným

agras þat is clepid sentorie

þe mountaunce of a peny

wiþte . **and tempre** hit wiþ vrine

of awomman . **and 3if** hit him to

drinke . **and he schal ouercome**

al his euil . **and he schal passe**

out . **and** afterwardus . **neme** þre

corppis of hertistunge *and* go

tismelk (f. 31r)

Less frequent uses of the *punctus* in the recipes section (but also referred to in the relevant literature explored) include: a) to introduce an alternative item (in the shape of a prepositional phrase or a noun phrase) or course of action (a clause) as in (24), as the paragraph mark also does; b) to coordinate (11x) and to enumerate (4x) noun phrases (most of which are ingredients), as shown in (25); and c) to enclose Roman numerals (4 pairs, as in (26)) and a word in Latin in the English text (another pair, shown in (27)). Some of these also mark grammatical functions:

(24) Tak

þe ius of ground ýui . *and* do

hit to his noseterlis . **or þe**

ius of dragauns . or tempre

wel þe rose . *and* boyle wel in

wýne wiþ a lite honý. (f. 30v)

(25) Tak a quan
 tite of Rewe . **a noþer of**
 ground ýui . **and þe dridde . þe**
lef of lorere . *and* boýle (f. 24r)

(26) violette *and* . **v.** hanful of
 auence croppis *and* rote *and* . **v.**
 of erbe water *and* . **v.** of betay
 ne croppis *and* rote (f. 39r)

(27) *and* let boýle hem
 to gedere bý þe space of þis
 psalm sýng. **miserere mei** | |
ds . *and* þanne do þi lýcour in a (ff. 39v-40r)

Finally, the passage in Latin (ff. 37v-38r) offers a very specific use of the *punctus* (7×), which is marking off the components Son and Holy Spirit in the prayer-oriented sequence of words in f. 37v (see (1)), and also to enclose a capital “N” in f. 38r.

Therefore, the uses of the *punctus* in the *LI* reveal that it is conceived as a versatile symbol that performs different grammatical functions at all levels (sentential, clausal and phrasal), along with others that can be placed at the macro-textual or pragmatic domains (textual and interactional). This fully coincides with what the relevant literature reports for this sign.

As with the paragraph marks, it is worth casting light on the distribution of the *punctus* across the whole *LI*. Even if some uses of the *punctus* are common to all four sections, a change is observed after f. 32v, since from this point onwards it gets restricted mainly to marking the end of titles of recipes or the end of recipes themselves, and also to marking off Roman numerals (a use which is only found in the drink of Antioche section).

4. CONCLUSIONS

The study conducted has disclosed a fairly systematic punctuation practice in the *LI* in W405, which is oriented towards the marking of pragmatic functions at different levels (chiefly textual and occasionally interactional) and of grammatical functions (at sentential, clausal and phrasal levels). Contrariwise, there is no trace of the rhetorical function, even if the invocation to Hippocrates can be placed under a verse tradition. The specific pragmatic functions discussed are context-dependent (see also Marqués-Aguado 2009: 67-68), insofar as the particular uses are conditioned by the specialised nature of text, which includes recipes and their titles,

alternative procedures, and so on. Grammatical functions, in turn, are not bound by the type of text, but rather depend on syntactic structures being clearly deployed.

The findings of this study agree in general terms with those of other studies examined. The analysis has shown that punctuation marks are not systematically added in all the contexts where a particular use is attested (see e.g. de la Cruz Cabanillas 2014: 155-156), but this cannot be taken as an indicator of its fully random nature either. Rather to the contrary, the study conducted points at clear tendencies of use that show “internal coherence” (de la Cruz Cabanillas 2014: 156). The examples offered also evince that some of the uses examined can be served by two signs in the text (i.e. the paragraph mark and the *punctus*), as is also the case of most of the studies surveyed (Rodríguez-Álvarez 1999: 29; Esteban-Segura 2009: 105; Marqués-Aguado 2009: 68 and 2011: 71; or de la Cruz Cabanillas 2014: 156, to mention but a few). Nonetheless, if attention is paid to the relation of functions and signs, the paragraph mark has been found to be more frequently used to signal pragmatic functions, whereas the *punctus* has a wider scope and displays both grammatical and pragmatic functions. This reveals some kind of specialisation of uses or functions for each punctuation symbol.

Quantitative evidence provides us with a general overview of the punctuation practice in the *LI*, but qualitative assessment of the data allows us to uncover interesting scribal practices. As explained in section 2, Edmar suggested that three scribes could have participated in the rendering of the *LI*, with breaks in ff. 32v and 38r. When analysed in detail, the pointing practice changes across the *LI*, since the total number of punctuation signs diminishes drastically after f. 32v (with only 23 *puncti* and 9 paragraph marks out of the total of 298x in the *LI*, and with some folios completely devoid of punctuation). Moreover, the range of uses of the *punctus* becomes unexpectedly reduced, and no paragraph marks are attested beyond f. 37 v (immediately before the text in Latin and the second likely break). This would point at scribal, rather than authorial, punctuation, and would add evidence to the possibility of having several scribes rendering the *LI*, although further work on this textual tradition could bring to light additional evidence along this line.

It is hoped that contributions like this may help to build a diachronic account of punctuation practices in medieval times, with special focus on non-literary texts. In any case, future work in the field lies ahead, including the contribution of recent approaches like the pragmatics-on-the-page one.

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