1. Introduction. This proposal for MEDIEVAL QUESTION MARK and MEDIEVAL EXCLAMATION MARK derives largely from the omnibus Medievalist punctuation character proposal, L2/16-125 “Revised Proposal to add Medievalist punctuation characters (WG2 N4726)” by Michael Everson et al. This proposal requests two punctuation characters be added for support of medieval European linguistic and literary research and publication. If this proposal is accepted, the following characters will be encoded:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>⹓</td>
<td>MEDIEVAL EXCLAMATION MARK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⹔</td>
<td>MEDIEVAL QUESTION MARK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Medieval exclamation mark (*punctus exclamativus*). An original indicator of *positura* is also known as *punctus admirativus*. This is the origin of the modern exclamation mark and reversed exclamation mark. A glyph variant ♂ stands upright; the character conventionally has two dots, unlike the modern EXCLAMATION MARK. One character, U+2E53 ⹓ MEDIEVAL EXCLAMATION MARK has been proposed here for encoding. See Figures 1, 5, 6, 7, 11.

3. Medieval exclamation mark (*punctus exclamativus*). This originally indicated *positura* but came to indicate a question requiring an answer. This is the origin of the modern ? QUESTION MARK and ¿ INVERTED QUESTION MARK. The glyph for this character is sometimes angular with one to three hooks and is typically slanted toward the right; the vertical form we know today dates to the late 15th century. One character, U+2E56 ⹔ MEDIEVAL QUESTION MARK has been proposed here for encoding. A related function, the *punctus percontatius*, indicated a rhetorical question and is represented by U+2E2E ¿ REVERSED QUESTION MARK. See Figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13.

4. Linebreaking. Line-breaking properties for these are suggested as follows.

Like U+0021 ! EXCLAMATION MARK (EX (Exclamation)): 2E53..2E54

5. Unicode Character Properties. Character properties are proposed here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Property Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2E56;MEDIEVAL EXCLAMATION MARK;Po;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2E57;MEDIEVAL QUESTION MARK;Po;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


7. Figures

Signos de puntuación en textos españoles

Los signos de puntuación en códices y documentos españoles de la Edad Media es muy irregular. Agustín Millares Carlo, uno de los más rigurosos especialistas en escritura visigótica, afirmó que «los signos en códices y documentos de escritura visigótica pertenecen a más de un sistema y su equivalencia respecto a los actuales no se deja precisar».

Los signos son éstos:

- • :
- \( : \)
- \( \) \( \)
- \( \)

A partir del siglo XII y en textos en escritura carolingia se empezó a regularizar el sistema de puntuación con notable mengua de los signos: casi en exclusiva se utilizaron para indicar las pausas el punto (.) en línea de escritura, y el punto con virgula sobrepuesta (;), la pausa final se indicó con un signo formado así: ; ;

En los documentos escritos en castellano en la baja Edad Media, la puntuación es muy irregular, adoptándose rayas y curvas acompañadas de puntos a veces para señalar y no con exactitud los periodos.

**Figure 1.** Sample from Núñez Contreras 1994 showing MEDIEVAL EXCLAMATION MARK and MEDIEVAL QUESTION MARK.

![Figure 1](image1.png)

**Figure 2.** Sample of Augustinian text from Thompson 1912 the MEDIEVAL QUESTION MARK (in *deus eris?*) though in the transcription the QUESTION MARK has been used (as *deus eris*?).

![Figure 2](image2.png)
Figure 3. Sample from Parkes 1993: showing the MEDIEVAL QUESTION MARK with an angular font glyph though the manuscript glyph is less angular.

Figure 4. Sample from Parkes 1993:293, showing MEDIEVAL QUESTION MARK. In the Latin transcription the fourth one was left out after *locatus*.

Figure 5. Sample from Ouy 1987, showing MEDIEVAL EXCLAMATION MARK with its glyph variant !\ as opposed to the usual !.

Figure 6. Listing of the MEDIEVAL EXCLAMATION MARK and the MEDIEVAL QUESTION MARK from the Medieval Unicode Font Initiative specification version 3.0 (2009-07-05). Here the Latin names are used.
Figure 7. Example from Parkes 1993, showing MEDIEVAL EXCLAMATION MARK and MEDIEVAL QUESTION MARK. Although the scan is not very clear, there are definitely two dots on the /.

(iv) . . also used as a marginal sign by Richard de Bury to denote a passage containing a word illegible to him in the manuscript he was using.

? the mark of interrogation is usually a variant of /.

! the mark of exclamation is said to be o or ő or a colon, either above the first word or at the end of the sentence.¹

Figure 8. Discussion of the use of the single point in Denholm-Young 1964:78, followed by a discussion of the MEDIEVAL QUESTION MARK alongside the modern QUESTION MARK. For the shape of the marks used for exclamation described there (which is not the / proposed here), see Figure 10 below.

Figure 9. Sample from Loew 1914:246 discussing the MEDIEVAL QUESTION MARK. Of interest is the fact that after this mark was used internally within a sentence after a clause, and also finally where it was followed by a FULL STOP (‘.’, kerned as ‘.’). Note too the 2-shaped diacritic used at the beginning of the sentence clauses (over ubi and quis); this is analogous to the Armenian question mark, which goes over a stressed vowel. The usage here of both the combining 2-shaped mark and the MEDIEVAL QUESTION MARK (analogous to Spanish ¿?) is confined to the south Italian minuscule known as the Beneventan script; how the 2-shaped mark should be encoded requires further study. (If we had combining European digits as we do for Devanagari and Grantha, I would just use that. I would not use U+1DE2 COMBINING LATIN SMALL LETTER R ROTUNDA because that would likely clash with other uses of that character in medieval texts. See L2/11-375 (2011-10-15), which should have been accepted.)
**Exclamation Marks**

There is no consistent and uniform method for marking an exclamation. In MSS. of the developed period we find an oblique hook (⌜), or the mere oblique line, over a, but this is probably nothing more than the ordinary acute accent used over other stressed syllables and especially over monosyllabic words. The dot which is found in the middle of the o is not confined to exclamatory o. In glosses we find o with the acute accent placed over words in the vocative case, e.g.

\[\text{Incipit pater riu cognoscere matrem.}\]

The sign which is commonly used to mark interrogative sentences is occasionally placed over proper names in the vocative case to call attention to the intonation proper to direct address. But this sign is not a conventional exclamation mark like our own, but an inflexion sign indicating a certain rise and fall of the voice.²

**Figure 10.** Sample from Loew 1914:235, discussing the Beneventan exclamation marks, o, ò, and ò, which are different from the MEDIEVAL EXCLAMATION MARK proposed here.

![Exclamation marks](image)

The question mark was rather late in coming in; it found currency very slowly, probably because the order of the words sufficiently denoted the interrogatory character of the sentence. That is probably why most penmen were content to indicate the completion of the interrogative sentence with a comma, a period, a colon, or the virgule. The rather frequent use of the question mark in exclamatory sentences, both in manuscripts and in printed books, was probably due to the fact that so many questions partake of the character of exclamations. In shape the early question mark, often found within a sentence, was very much like an inverted semicolon, the dot being replaced by a comma; many penmen, especially in France, made it almost horizontal (No. 3). Even those penmen who were acquainted with and made use of the question mark often preferred to use the virgule.

**Exclamation marks** seem to have found favor even later and more slowly than question marks. Their use was for a long time as lawless as that of the other new punctuation marks; though they seem never to have been used for other points, almost any other point could be used as a substitute for them. One of the most curious places for a colon was above the first word of an exclamation. Monsieur Chassant informs us, in his *Paléographie des chartes*, that in French documents from the eleventh century to the seventeenth the exclamation mark took any of the forms shown in No. 4.

**Figure 11.** Sample and discussion of Elizabethan punctuation marks Tannenbaum 1931:141, 143-144. Item 3 shows the MEDIEVAL QUESTION MARK, item 4 shows three Beneventan-style exclamation marks (see Figure 10 above) and then one MEDIEVAL EXCLAMATION MARK.
Punctuation is a complicated and much debated matter, connected as it is with such different subjects as grammar, prosody, rhetoric, liturgical practice and music, and because it is immediately concerned with the sense of the text. Only its most elementary features can be dealt with here. Modern punctuation is of a syntactical nature, that is, it indicates the grammatical structure of the text. Medieval punctuation had partly the same function, but was to a great extent rhetorical, in other words it underscored the structure of the text (its rhetorical units) as it was read aloud. It not only marked the pauses the reader had to observe while pronouncing the written text and their length, but also the pitch. This is clearly visible in the question-mark (punctus interrogativus), of general use in the period studied in the present book, which has its origin in a neume or sign of musical notation, which indicated that the voice had to rise at the end of the sentence (11).

Ancient punctuation theory distinguished three signs for three different pauses: comma, for the short pause; colon, for the medial pause; and periodus for the final pause (which can be replaced by the question-mark). In the so-called Cistercian punctuation system a second sign for a medial pause was added, the punctus flexus, which has approximately the shape of figure 7 (12) and was used mainly in Bibles and liturgical books by the scribes of that order, by the Carthusians, Dominicans and the Augustinian Canons of the Windesheim Congregation (pls. 33, 45, 57, 95).

In the late Middle Ages the set of three (or four) punctuation signs recommended by the grammatical treatises is rarely found in Latin manuscripts. Most scribes kept to one or two signs in addition to the question-mark. The point on the baseline, or slightly above it (punctus), was frequently used as a sign for all pauses. More sophisticated punctuation normally provided two pauses: punctus, which was used for the final pause (where it is followed by a majuscule) and for a short pause; and the 'tick-and-point' (inverted semi-colon) or punctus elevatus (13), which likewise indicated a short pause. The final point often took the shape of a semicolon (punctus versus). In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the points were often replaced by slanting hairline strokes (virgulae suspensivae (pls. 68, 71, 139)). The exclamation-mark (punctus exclamativus) appeared in the second half of the fourteenth century but was of extremely limited use.  

One finds in general a great deal of freedom and inconsistency in the punctuation of later medieval manuscripts especially. Although its importance for understanding the sense of a given text should not be underestimated, the reproduction of medieval punctuation in a modern transcription can render the reading of the text cumbersome and we would generally not

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7 See examples in Parkes, Pause and Effect (see n. 6), pls. 30–9.

**Figure 12.** Discussion of punctuation in Derolez 2003:185. № 11 is the MEDIEVAL QUESTION MARK; № 12 is the punctus flexus (not yet encoded) and № 13 is the PUNCTUS ELEVATUS.

Derolez’s reference to the punctus exclamativus in his footnote 7 points to Parkes 1993, and Figure 7 above shows the punctus exclamativus from Parkes’ Plate 30.
Figure 13. Example from Parkes 1993 (Plate 37) showing the MEDIEVAL QUESTION MARK in Antiqua and Blackletter typefaces. The text is by John Whitgift, *The defense of the answere of the admonition against the reply by T[homas] C[artwright] (London, H. Bynneman for H. Toye, 1574).*
Medieval punctuation

2E53  /  MEDIEVAL EXCLAMATION MARK
  • punctus exclamativus
  → 0021!  exclamation mark

2E54  ?  MEDIEVAL QUESTION MARK
  • punctus interrogativus
  → 003F?  question mark
A. Administrative
1. Title
Proposal to add two mediaeval punctuation characters to the UCS
2. Requester’s name
Michael Everson
3. Requester type (Member body/Liaison/Individual contribution)
Individual contribution.
4. Submission date
2020-11-10
5. Requester’s reference (if applicable)

6. Choose one of the following:
6a. This is a complete proposal
Yes.
6b. More information will be provided later
No.

B. Technical – General
1. Choose one of the following:
1a. This proposal is for a new script (set of characters)
No.
1b. Proposed name of script

1c. The proposal is for addition of character(s) to an existing block
Yes
1d. Name of the existing block
Supplementary Punctuation

2. Number of characters in proposal
2.

3. Proposed category (A-Contemporary; B.1-Specialized (small collection); B.2-Specialized (large collection); C-Major extinct; D-Attested extinct; E-Minor extinct; F-Archaic Hieroglyphic or Ideographic; G-Obscure or questionable usage symbols)
Category B.1.

4a. Is a repertoire including character names provided?
Yes.
4b. If YES, are the names in accordance with the “character naming guidelines” in Annex L of P&P document?
Yes.
4c. Are the character shapes attached in a legible form suitable for review?
Yes.
5a. Who will provide the appropriate computerized font (ordered preference: True Type, or PostScript format) for publishing the standard?
Michael Everson.
5b. If available now, identify source(s) for the font (include address, e-mail, ftp-site, etc.) and indicate the tools used:
Michael Everson, Fontographer.
6a. Are references (to other character sets, dictionaries, descriptive texts etc.) provided?
Yes.
6b. Are published examples of use (such as samples from newspapers, magazines, or other sources) of proposed characters attached?
Yes.
7. Does the proposal address other aspects of character data processing (if applicable) such as input, presentation, sorting, searching, indexing, transliteration etc. (if yes please enclose information)?
Yes.
8. Submitters are invited to provide any additional information about Properties of the proposed Character(s) or Script that will assist in correct understanding of and correct linguistic processing of the proposed character(s) or script.
See above.

C. Technical – Justification
1. Has this proposal for addition of character(s) been submitted before? If YES, explain.
Yes, some of the characters have. See N3193.
2a. Has contact been made to members of the user community (for example: National Body, user groups of the script or characters, other experts, etc.)?
Yes.
2b. If YES, with whom?
The authors are members of the user community.

2c. If YES, available relevant documents
3. Information on the user community for the proposed characters (for example: size, demographics, information technology use, or publishing use) is included?
Medievalists, Latinists, and other scholars.
4a. The context of use for the proposed characters (type of use; common or rare)
Used historically and in modern editions.
4b. Reference
5a. Are the proposed characters in current use by the user community?
Yes.
5b. If YES, where?

**Scholarly publications.**

6a. After giving due considerations to the principles in the P&P document must the proposed characters be entirely in the BMP?

Yes.

6b. If YES, is a rationale provided?

Yes.

6c. If YES, reference

**Accordance with the Roadmap. Keep with other punctuation characters.**

7. Should the proposed characters be kept together in a contiguous range (rather than being scattered)?

No.

8a. Can any of the proposed characters be considered a presentation form of an existing character or character sequence?

No.

8b. If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?

Yes.

8c. If YES, reference

9a. Can any of the proposed characters be encoded using a composed character sequence of either existing characters or other proposed characters?

No.

9b. If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?

Yes.

9c. If YES, reference

10a. Can any of the proposed character(s) be considered to be similar (in appearance or function) to an existing character?

Yes.

10b. If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?

Yes.

10c. If YES, reference

**Some characters are ancestors of modern characters.**

11a. Does the proposal include use of combining characters and/or use of composite sequences (see clauses 4.12 and 4.14 in ISO/IEC 10646-1: 2000)?

No.

11b. If YES, is a rationale for such use provided?

No.

11c. If YES, reference

11d. Is a list of composite sequences and their corresponding glyph images (graphic symbols) provided?

No.

11e. If YES, reference

12a. Does the proposal contain characters with any special properties such as control function or similar semantics?

No.

12b. If YES, describe in detail (include attachment if necessary)

13a. Does the proposal contain any Ideographic compatibility character(s)?

No.

13b. If YES, is the equivalent corresponding unified ideographic character(s) identified?