ABSTRACT
Traditionally, the study of medieval punctuation systems has been skipped by scholars in view of the lack of consistency in their use. However, specific studies have been recently published showing that the punctuation practice of medieval scribes was not entirely whimsical (Alonso-Almeida, 2002; Leitner, 1992; Rodriguez-Alvarez, 1998). In the present paper, a 15th-century arithmetical treatise housed in British Library, MS Egerton 2622 (ff. 136-152) will be analysed with a twofold objective: a) to offer a detailed account of the use and function of symbols in the treatise; and b) to find the correspondence with modern punctuation.

KEYWORDS
codicology, editing, grammatical punctuation, manuscript, Middle English, rhetorical punctuation, palaeography

I. INTRODUCTION
Éats, shoots and leaves is the title of Lynn Truss' recipe-book for marks of punctuation. She opens it with an ingenious punctuation joke in which a panda goes into a café, orders a sandwich, eats it, draws a gun and fires two shots in the air (2003: 2). Even though the expression eats, shoots and leaves could make sense in a western film context, the panda's utterance does not convey a different sense, as it coincides with a dictionary definition of a panda, being defined as a bear-
like mammal that eats shoots and leaves. This pun points out that punctuation really matters inasmuch as a single comma may turn this utterance into the actual definition of the animal.

Unfortunately, this notion about the importance of marks of punctuation has not always been that widespread. In the case of medieval manuscripts, for instance, a close analysis of marks of punctuation reveals a set of contradictory issues which the scholar often finds difficult to interpret. The main problem, in our view, has to do with the scribes' attitudes towards pointing, which differs from modern punctuation in the following ways: a) the inventory of marks of punctuation varies from one author to another, and from period to period, a fact which complicates the task of obtaining conclusive data about historical punctuation; b) medieval scribes only punctuated where confusion was likely to arise, that is why the absence of marks may become even more frequent than their actual use (see Parkes, 1978: 138-139); and c) marks of punctuation did not have exclusive uses, all symbols being interchangeable (Jenkinson, 1926: 154). To the eye of a modern reader, therefore, historical punctuation seems to be a hotchpotch of symbols irregularly distributed throughout the folios of the manuscript, often with overlapping uses, whose function is difficult to comprehend. This has been, in fact, the traditional conception of punctuation in historical texts (see Rodríguez-Alvarez, 1999: 27-28 for a more comprehensive view on the absence, non-specialisation and arbitrariness of marks of punctuation).

Even though this is the picture that we find in many medieval prose compositions, there are some others which present a coherent inventory of marks. Each symbol has particular uses to express all types of grammatical relations, both at macro- and micro-structural level, apart from those used rhetorically, which may also have an overwhelming importance in historical texts (Rodríguez-Alvarez, 1998: 123-128). In the light of this, it is a must for modern palaeographers to analyse these texts in order to obtain a wider scope on punctuation marks in medieval England. In this paper, therefore, a 15th century text will be analysed. Accordingly, section 2 is a description of the text; section 3 is concerned with the treatment of punctuation in the only edition published so far; section 4 reports the methodological scheme followed in our study while section 5 deals with the analysis of symbols in the original. Finally, our conclusions are offered in section 6.

II. THE CRAFTE OF NOMBRYNGE
The text analysed is a 15th-century treatise housed in British Library, MS Egerton 2622 (ff. 136-165), containing a Middle English version of The Crafte of Nombringe. The text is written by a sole hand in vellum using a readable hybrid script — the Anglicana Formalia and the Secretaria, the two most widespread 15th-century scripts (Calle-Martín, 2004a: 82-84; Petti, 1977: 15). Given the good state of preservation of the document, it is still possible to see some traces of frame and line ruling. The linguistic analysis of the text reveals that it is a 15th-century copy of a 14th-century text. Undeniable influence of the West Midlands dialect — West Derbyshire according to the LALME (McIntosh, Samuels & Benskin, 1986, 3: 80-81).
The Crofte of Nombringe is a translation of Alexander de Villadieu's Carmen de Algorismo. This Latin piece was written in the 12th century and, together with Sacrobosco's De Arte Numerandi, were the most widely known arithmetical treatises in the 14th century, to such extent that they served as arithmetical textbooks in many centres of learning as well as being a compulsory reading for those engaged in the study of the calendar and the astrolabe. In the case of English, for instance, there are three translations: one housed in British Library, Egerton MS 2622 (ff. 136'-165' ); another in Columbia University Library, Plimpton MS 259 ( ff. 55'-77' ); and the third in Cambridge University Library, MS Ll.4.14 (ff. 121'-140' ). The textual variation of these treatises has been researched by Acker, who concludes that they come from three distinct Latin glosses of the Carmen (Acker, 1993: 74). While the two first treatises are direct renderings of a different Latin version, the Cambridge text seems to be a compilation of Villadieu's and Sacrobosco's pieces.

The Egerton MS is a translation where Latin excerpts are followed by a Middle English description of the arithmetical operation involved. The translator's preoccupation to convince the reader of the accuracy of his rendering leads him to use the Latin version as an authority on arithmetical terms with statements like expone sic versus, the sentence of yisverse is [...] here he teches a generalle rewle, etc. In addition, a constant worry about the correct understanding of the text is observed, that is why the translator is so meticulous when explaining the procedure to solve the arithmetical operation with everyday expressions, probably to encourage his readers, such as it is lyg ysh as dyche water, it is lyynov to ye certayn, doute ye no, as you knowest wel, etc.

III. FORMER EDITORS

There are two published editions of The Crofte of Nombringe. While Smith's (1908: 301-309) is just a partial reproduction of the beginning, Steele's edition (1922: 3-32) stands out for being the only complete critical edition of this mediaeval algorym. As in other Early English Text Society (EEfTS) publications from the early 20th century, the editorial method followed by Steele differs from that of a modern editor. From a contemporaneous perspective, the main shortcoming of the edition arises from the absence of key details of the original: there are often mistranscriptions; inconsistent reconstruction of abbreviations; unjustified lexical changes owing to the editor's pericope; omissions, both of single words and full lines; apart from the information contained in the critical apparatus concerning the date and the dialectal provenance of the text, which is basically erroneous (see Calle-Martin, 2004a: 78-88).

The rendering of punctuation symbols, on the other hand, is even more problematic insofar as there is not any kind of guidance in the introduction, leaving the reader with the task of ascertaining the exact meaning of the symbols used. The dilemma of preserving or modernizing the original punctuation is ambiguously accomplished by Steele, who prefers to remain somewhere in between. Even though the tendency to modernize predomiinates (with the
use of commas, colons and semicolons). Steele incorporates some of the original marks, such as the *paraph* mark or the *virgula*, which undoubtedly obscure the editor’s intention. More bewildering is, however, the frequent use of the *punctus* as in the original text. The merging of these two systems of punctuation leaves the reader at a loss to ascertain which marks belong to the original and which ones are modernized.

Furthermore, the mingling of these systems within the same edition presents another problem, having to do with the patchy level of standardisation of the edition. An analysis of Steele’s marks of punctuation also reveals a number of inconsistencies which make it unsuitable for scholarly use. The most important are the following:

a) When enumerating, Steele haphazardly combines the use of the full stop with the comma. Note also the unexpected use of the colon after subtractioin:

> Here telleshorthere beii. 7. spicior pantes of th’s craft. The first is called addicioii, pe secuise is called subtraccion: The thryd is called duplicacion. The 4. is called dinnicicioii. The 5. is called *multiplicacion* (Steele. 1922: 7).

b) Coordinate clauses are also connected by means of a full stop:

> Here he telles but bhe hier iooner most be more ben*neither*, or else euene as mych but he may iiot be lasse (Steele. 1922: 11).

This shall do away be figure of pe lyer number hat was cast io be figure of be neither iooner. Aiid write here be digit of pe Composyti. Aiid set be articul of pe composite iext after pe digit in pe saine rewe, y/cere be iio iio figures after. Rat y/cere be ino figures after hat digit […] (Steele, 1922: 9).

c) The relationship between the main and the subordinate clause is signalled either with a full stop or with no mark of punctuation at all, both possibilities being odd to the modern reader. See an example of each:

> Aiid lede benither figure stoide stilleuer-more stillpouhe ydo. For bere-by bhou schal wyte whether bhou hast doie wel or iio […] (Steele. 1922: 8).

> Here he teches a geieiralle rewle hat yforc first figure in pe rewle of figures tehei a nombr hat is euiee al but nombr of figuys in hat rewle schal be euiee […] (Steele. 1922: 7).

d) The distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses is by large disregarded because the mark is used without considering the type of relativization. Likewise, sentential relatives are reproduced without any kind of pause.

> […] bhou schalle first doublle be figure, the quych stoides vnder but merke, & ben pouschalt doublulhat merke […] (Steele. 1922: 16).

> […] fortene is composyti of foure hat is a digit & of teii hat is all articulle (Steele, 1922: 6).

Now doublul this ioinbur & begyni in be lyft side, & doublule 2 hat schall be 4 (Steele, 1922: 20).
These shortcomings may be justified in the light of the editorial policy of the EETS at the beginning of the 20th century. It is widely known that the Society was initially created to supply the *Oxford English Dictionary* with new entries. Words mattered even more than the edition itself, a fact which may, to a broad extent, explain the inconsistencies of Steele’s edition. This philosophy, however, has changed one century later since its most immediate aim now is the publication of scholarly editions to offer faithful transcripts of the original. It is, nonetheless, strange that Steele’s volume was reprinted in 1998, preserving the same shortcomings of the 1922 edition. As it is now published, it is not valid for research purposes, either at a morpho-syntactic, lexical or codicological level, punctuation included. In light of this, a new critical edition of this treatise would be more than welcome insofar as it could emend Steele’s faulty transcriptions, reconsider the date and provenance of the text, as well as incorporate a more coherent position about punctuation, whether old or niodern.

**IV. METHODOLOGY**

The present study is entirely based on a previous editing of *The Crafte of Nombringe* (Calle-Martín, 2001: 345-410). As Steele’s edition is not recommended, a careful collation with the original manuscript was needed to obtain the catalogue of marks of punctuation as the scribe penned them himself. This electronic version of the text eventually served as the input for *WORDSMAIL TOOLS* 3.0 (Scott, 1996) which generated the inventory of symbols automatically. The result was then saved as a text file and downloaded onto an Excel spreadsheet so that the columns (from left to right) could contain the previous context, the mark itself, the ensuing context, and the reference according to the original (folio and line number). This software is particularly appropriate for the treatment of marks of punctuation as the instances can be arranged in alphabetical order according to the word which appears after the symbol under scrutiny. Using this method, the taxonomy of the uses of punctuation marks is eased as the complete set of coordinate and subordinate clauses along with those heading a direct or reported speech could be grouped easily. Given the impossibility of a further automatic classification, the other uses were arranged manually.

**V. THE INVENTORY OF PUNCTUATION IN MS EGEKTON 2622**

According to Parkes, the general repertory of punctuation in the later Middle Ages was based on four principal components—the *punctus*, the *punctus elevatus*, the *punctus interrogativus* and *littera notabiliores*, as well as the *virgula*, the *pirithph* and the *positura* (Parkes, 1992: 42-45). The *Crafte of Nombringe*, in turn, only shows evidence of the *punctus*, the *paraph* and the *virgula suspensiva*. Being a 15th-century composition, The *Crafte of Nombringe* should display a more far-reaching repertory, as in other contemporary prose texts (Alonso-Almeida, 2002: 207-
The lack of the punctus *elevatus* and the *punctus* *interrogativus* actually sheds light on the fact that the treatise housed in Egerton 2622 could be a 15th-century copy of a former original, probably dated one hundred years earlier. Apart from these marks of punctuation, the scribe occasionally makes use of the colon (:) and the *double hyphen* (=), which appear to mark off the splitting of a word into two lines.

A further issue has to do with the ultimate function of these marks (whether grammatical or rhetorical). From a stylistic point of view, *The Crafield of Nombringe* was basically written as a reference book, probably for those involved in the private study of the *computus* and other similar sciences. The most immediate aim of this composition was silent reading; therefore, the "dilemma" between the grammatical and the rhetorical side of punctuation will be solved here in favour of the former, though rhetorical punctuation can also be found.

In our description, we begin with the analysis of the *paragraphus* and the *virgula suspensiva* because they are the symbols which are most commonly used to signal macro structural relations. The punctus comes next, being the mark typically used with micro-structural implications.

**V.1. Initial shading**

The *Crafield of Nombringe* shows initial red and blue shading of some letters, which are found to have the effect of a punctuation mark (Lucas, 1971: 11). The first letter of a major section is systematically a coloured bold-typed *majuscule* which is purposely employed to help skimming and thus identify the major parts of the text—the art of numbering itself as well as the various arithmetical operations such as addition, subtraction, doubling, halving and multiplication.

**V.2. The paraph mark**

The *paraph* mark, or section marker as Lucas (1971: 4) calls it, is represented by means of a capital letter C with two vertical strokes, the first one curved rightwards. There are 189 instances of the *paraph* in *The Crafield of Nombringe*, which may be either blue or red-hued; the use of one or the other does not respond to any particular intention of the scribe, being just for decorative purposes.

Owing to the close resemblance with the printer's *sign*, we will use this same symbol in the instances below. As in many other medieval compositions, Egerton 2622 shows that some punctuation symbols, especially the *virgula suspensiva* and the *paraph mark*, were inserted after the writing of the text. This is demonstrated by the existence of some blank spaces in the running text where these marks should have been inserted, being likely the result of the limner's slip.

The use of this symbol is found to vary in Middle English texts. For instance, Alonso-Almeida (2002: 225), in his analysis of a Middle English reredy book, found that the paraph was a visual device to indicate that a word runs over from the previous line. Zeeman, on the other hand, stated that "[i]t marks a significant pause in the flow of writing, when one idea or portion of narrative or argument has been completed, and *some breathing space is needed*; perhaps for thought on what has gone before, perhaps *anticipation of what is to come*” (1956:
13). It is used as a macro structural marker to indicate particular relationships within the paragraph as well as the major sections and subsections within the text. This is the dominant use of the paraph in Middle English compositions, as shown in Lucas (1971: 6) and Calle-Martín (2004b: 417-418), etc. In The Crafte of Nombringe, in turn, the paraph is used in the following cases:

a) To mark off the beginning of a section or subsection: this is one of the most widespread uses of the paraph, totalling 62 instances. It is a grammatical symbol as it is clearly indicating the end of a unit and at the same time looks forward to a new structurally independent unit (Lucas, 1971: 6). The first instance below shows how the paraph is used as a section marker to signal the end of the arithmetical operation of addition and thus introduce the art of doubling, as the author calls it himself. On the other hand, it may be also used as a device to mark off the beginning of a subsection wherein both sense-units still have some sort of semantic connection, as in the second example below, where the author is dealing with the art of halving and the paraph is used to split two cases.

\[\text{Aiid yei schal \textit{yu} liaue aii Ensampulle a\textit{geyn} loke \& se \& but \textit{yu} liaue yis saine \textit{yu} liaie iiyse \textit{wro3i}.} \]
\[\text{\textit{Seq uitior} de duplacione: Si vis \textit{duplare} \textit{numerus} sic incipe priiiio Scribe \textit{figuram} \textit{seriem} \textit{quondam} \textit{unius} velistu (f. 146', 11'-17').} \]
\[\text{Aiid yis saine iionibar yu haddyst a fore or \textit{yu} be gaii to inedy \& if \textit{yu} take gode liede} \]
\[\text{\textit{The} iiext iiisainpul yat had in ye 4\textit{e} case ofinediaciioi was yis 4678. (f. 152', 15'-19').} \]

Additionally, the paraph is found as a sense-unit sign to single out the sentence which follows. In the instance below, it serves to inform the reader that this particular information will be dealt with in detail afterwards:

\[\text{I here he telles how yu schalt worch in yis \textit{Craft}; he says fyrst whan yii hast writen ye nombre yu schalt be gynt at ye fyrst figure iii the lyfside \& doublelye yat figure \& ye nombre yat coines yere of yu schalt write as yu diddyst iii addicion as} \]
\[\text{\textit{iI} schal telle ye iii ye case. versus (f. 146', 24-30).} \]

b) To separate the English and the Latin pieces: the main function of this mark would be exclusively grammatical, as it is a visual device to announce where the text in the other language begins. In the following instance the paraph is basically a section marker, while the other marks the beginning of an English narrative. Therefore, it must not be considered a section marker as such because both Latin and English convey the same meaning.

\[\text{\textit{iI} Sequitor de duplacione: Si vis \textit{duplicare} \textit{numerus} sic incipe primo Scribe \textit{figuram} \textit{seriem} \textit{quondam} \textit{unius} velistu.} \]
\[\text{\textit{This is the Chapture of duplicatioi in ye quych \textit{craft} yu most liaue \& hiow 4\textit{e} thyngey (f. 146', 14-19).} \]
\[\text{\textit{iAritculus si siti in priiiio limite citran: Articulon vero reliquis inscribe \textit{figuris}.} \]
\[\text{\textit{h}ere he telles how yu schal write when ye iiionibar yat yu lase to write is an Articul (f. 139', 5-8).} \]
In the same way, the purph is also used to separate the Latin verses from one another, the function of which would be again grammatical as it is just a visual device to inform the reader about the different lines quoted from the *Carmen*. The following example shows the three different uses of the purph described so far—the first one as a section marker to indicate the beginning of the art of numbering, the next three to separate the various Latin verses, and the last one to indicate the beginning of writing in the vernacular:

[...] as I have sayd a fore yai were foide fyrist in Inde of a kygiye of yat Cuiititre yat was called Algor. Priima significat unum duo vero secundae Tercia significat tria sic procede sinistre Donec ad extremam veiiiau que cifra vocatur. Capitulus primum de significacione figurarum In yis verse is notifide ye significacion of yese figuris (f. 136', 21-28).

c) So enumerate: the purph is systematically used to separate the different units of an enumeration, both clauses and phrases. It is a visual aid for the reader to find the elements of the enumeration but, at the same time, a pause is also implied. Likewise, the paraph may be also used with the punctus, though the former clearly predominate. See the following examples:

[...] yf yat figure of 6- stoiide in ye fyirst place he schould be token but 6 in ye 2 place lie schould be token sexty. In the 3 place he schould be token six hundredth. In ye 4 place six thousand. In ye 5 place sixty bowant. In ye sext place sex hundredth bowant. In ye 7 place 6 yowsant thousands. In ye 8 place sixty bowant thousands (f. 162', 12-21).

| This is the captiure of diiplacion in ye quyeli craft yu inost liaie & know 4 things: ye first yat yu inost know is what is diiplacion ye secunde is how many rewes of figures yu inost haue to yis craft: ye thrde is how inoiy cases inay liappe in yis craft ye fourete is what is ye profet of ye craft (f. 146', 17-34). |

d) To introduce direct speech: direct speech is niaterialized in the text in the form of questions and answers. The writer uses the paraph mark and the word questio to introduce these questions which, in my opinion, have the effect of a mark of punctuation to distinguish it from reported speech. The function of this mark would be rhetorical as it is informing the reader about the appropriate intonation to read the sentence. Likewise, the end may be signalled either by a paraph or a punctus:

And ye cifre tokens iiotliyig hym selfe for al ye nombre of ye ylke too figures is bot ten. Questio Why says he yat a cifre inaskys a figure to signifyste inore &c. I spoke for yis worde significatly ffor sothe it inay liappe after a cifre schuld coine a ioyei-cifre [...] (f. 137', 11-15).

Expone y too versus a fore yis pi-esceit craft ys called Algorismus in ye quyeli we vse teei figuies of Inde Questio Why teii figuies of Inde Solucio for as I haue sayd a fore yai were foide fyrist in Inde of a kygiye of yat Cuiititre yat was called Algor (f. 136', 18-23).
e) To conclude: the paraph is occasionally used to introduce a conclusion, which may be the result of an arithmetical operation or even the procedure itself for solving the task in hand. Its function would be rhetorical because it involves a minor pause for the reader to summarize the information contained in the preceding lines. See the following instances:

Aid be scial betokei sixty powsants thousantes. And so mych is tweiity powsant tyines 3: thousand. ¶ Aid yis rewle is generallly for alle manner of articules. Whethir yai be hundryth or powsant: but yu muste know well ye craft of ye wrychyng: ye ye tabulle or you know todo yus ... yu ymiide aftur yis rewle [...] (f. 162°, 22-28 aid f. 161°, 1-2).

Also yf you wold wete what is tweiity tyines: 30: taake ye digit of tweiity yat is 2: & taake ye digit of thryty yat is 3: & multiply 3: be 2: yat is 6: now in 6: beii 6: tyines. ¶ Aid so many hundyrythes ben in 20 tyines 30: (f. 161°, 24-29).

f) To introduce a coordinate clause: even though the punctus is the symbol more consistently used to introduce a coordinate clause, the paraph may seldom serve the same purposes. There is, however, a significant difference. From a semantic viewpoint, those coordinate clauses linked by a paraph contain key information about the arithmetical operation described and, as such, they act as a kind of warning for the reader to pay attention to what follows. Therefore, the paraph is rather a macro-structural marker to highlight where the most important information is, being conveyed here by means of a coordinate clause:

Aid lede ye ietlier figure stoide still euer inore til yu liane ydo: ffor yere by yu scial wyte wheyey yu hast done wel or iio as I scial tell ye afterward ... ye ende of yis Chapter ¶ Aid loke allgate yat you be gynie to worcli ... yis Craft of Addicion: ye ryght side here is an exemplay of yis case 1234: (f. 140°, 23-28 aid f. 141°, 1-2).

Caste 2 to fourre & yat wel be sex do a way 4: & write ... ye saine place ye figure of sex ¶ Aid lete ye figure of 2 in ye ietlier rewle stoide stilt (f. 141°, 2-5).

g) Before logical connectors, especially in the case of also, neuereles, ffoyermerove, noiv, etc. See the following instances:

As for ye fourte quwal is ye profet of yis craft & yotis to know what a risygt of a iromise I doublyde ffoyermer inore yu moest know & take gode lede in quychi side yis schalle be gyni ... yis craft or ellis yu inayst spyl alke yl hber (f. 146°, 4-9).

The figure of 5: was first wrote & he is ye first for he sittes oni ye ryght syde Aid ye figure of 3 is last ¶ Neuereles weii he says § Prima significat Vnum &c: yat is to say ye first betokeiies oni ye secunde ² (f. 136°, 10-14).
V.3. The *virgula suspensiva*

The *virgula* is represented in the treatise by means of an ordinary slash (/). There are just eleven instances of the *virgula* in *The Crafte of Nombringe* and it is therefore impossible to evaluate its uses and functions appropriately. Apart from the *virgula* itself, the treatise also shows instances of the *perioslash*, as Arakelian names it (1975: 619); which consists of a period together with a slash (\). As in the case of the *paraph*, the function of the *virgula* in *mediaeval* England is contradictory as the different studies show that it was a mark of punctuation used for contrasting uses. In this fashion, Lucas’ study perfectly summarizes the manifold applications of the slash in the sense that it could appear “before a section dealing with an entirely different subject from that which preceded, sometimes before a section dealing with a different aspect of a subject already introduced, sometimes before a statement summarizing what has preceded, sometimes before a separate item in a series, and sometimes before a new sentence where there is no obvious change in subject matter” (Lucas, 1971: 9).

Subsequent studies, however, have demonstrated that Lucas offers just one side of the coin. Alonso-Almeida (2002: 222-224) observed that the slash was used primarily as a macrostructural marker to announce the beginning and the end of a recipe as well as to separate the different sections of the recipe. Arakelian (1975: 617-618) and Gradon (1983: 41) concluded that it is rather a micro-structural marker to link sentences on the same level of embedding, that is, coordinate clauses with the same or a different conjoined subject. Gradon, furthermore, suggests that in other contexts the *virgula* may also indicate the ending of a sentence. *The Crafte of Nombringe*, in turn, seems to combine these macro- and micro-structural views of the slash being used in the following contexts:

a) To indicate the beginning of a new section: in the following instance the writer uses the slash after the section title to announce the beginning of a new section. Its main function would be grammatical:

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Sequitur demultiplicacione / Sì tu pernumerenumerum vis multiplicare Scribe duas quoscunque velis series numerorum Ordo servetur vt ultima multiplicandi
Ponatur super anteriorum multiplicantes A leua reliques sint scripte multiplicantes
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b) To mark off the end of a sentence: the writer here makes use of the *virgula* to signal the sentence end and thus separate it from a new statement. Therefore, it is a grammatical device to split two sense-units, which may be either independent or semantically connected. It could also be rhetorical because a major pause is involved between both sense-units. Notice also that the *double virgule* may be used for this same purpose.

As for ye first you inost kiow yat addicioii is a castyiig to gedur of twoo nomburyis to oii nombre. As yf I aske qwat is twene & thre yu yel cast yese
twee[n]umbres to gedur & say yat it is yeue. ¶ As for ye secuilde you most know yat you schialt have twayne reves of figures. oii vndur a nother as here you mayst see (f. 140', 13-20).

Articulus si in prino limite cifram ¶ Articulum vero relictus inscribe figuris: ¶ Vel per se scribas si nulla figura sequatur / ¶ Here is ye secuilde case ye quyeli is yis yffere coine all articula of ye duplication of a figure you schialt do ry3t as you diddyst in addicicioi (f. 147', 11-17).

¶ De digitis vt iorina de multiplica simul & sic postea summa patebit //Here he puttes ye 4: rewle ye quyeli is yis yf you multiply oii composit be a digit as 6-

The perioslash, on the other hand, differs from the ordinary slash in their conjunctive versus the disjunctive nature. In his analysis of a Middle English manuscript, Arakelian (1975: 617-618) argues that the most outstanding difference between the two lies in their linking or splitting function. Whereas the virgule is eminently a conjunctive mark, the perioslash is basically disjunctive in the sense that it signals a final stop and, as such, separates structurally and semantically independent sense units. Accordingly, the function of this mark would be grammatical. The instance below shows how the writer makes use of the perioslash to separate the three things that the reader needs to multiply correctly and the main profit of this same craft.

As. for ye thryde you iiioseest know yat 8: maner of diuerse case may lyppe in yis craft: / The profet of yis Craft is to telle wheii a iioiiber is multiplyed be a iioyer qwat commys yer of (f. 153', 20-25).

V.4. The punctus

The punctus is found to have two positions in The Crafte of Nombrynge, at the baseline and in the middle. It is the most common symbol in The Crafte of Nombrynge, with 332 instances. Notably significant is the fact that the writer employs this mark to either introduce or circumscribe numerals; however, these instances have not been considered in our classification below.

A close reading of the text reveals that the punctus has a wide variety of uses. In Zecman’s words, “its function cannot be described in terms of grammar and syntax only […] It
may separate phrase from phrase, clause from clause, main statement from qualifying clause, or it may end a sentence" (1956: 14). Accordingly, the function of the punctus is threefold, that is, sentential, clausal and phrasal; this leads us to observe that the writer had a drastically different concept of sentence to the one we have nowadays, which is of a more far-reaching nature. An attempt to read this piece of prose shows that "he does not end each subject-predicate group neatly, but rather links it to a following series of sentences which amplify or expand the description" (Arakelian, 1975: 617). The punctus, therefore, plays a central role in this characteristic flow of writing as it is the device used to transmit all kinds of relations. The different uses of the punctus will be accounted for below.

V.4.1. The punctus at sentence level
This is the most widespread use of the punctus in The Crafte of Nombringe with 297 instances. Its function is grammatical because the writer uses it either to separate or to connect sense-units. Even though grammatical punctuation is the dominant function of the punctus here, there are also cases in which it may occur rhetorically. As they are undoubtedly less common, these will be commented in our description below. This use of the punctus may be further subdivided as follows.

a) To mark the end of an utterance: in the following instances, the writer is dealing with subtraction and the punctus marks the completion of the two examples offered as illustrations:

\[
\ldots \text{when you hast alle subtrayd ye yot hier iioinber here: yis schalle be ye iioinber here folyoig when yu hast subtrayd: (f. 145', 3-6).}
\]

Aiid yen schald yu have an Ensampulleaynloke & se & but yu liae yis same yu hase myse wro3t (f. 146', 10-13).

b) To mark the end of a sense-unit:

The figure of 3 yat hase yis schape 3: betokeis ten tynes inore yei he schuld & lie stode yere yat ye yure figure of 4 stondes yat is thirTY. The figure of 6 yat hase yis schape 6: betokeis ten tynes more yan he schuld & he stode yere as ye figure of 3 stondes for yere le schuld tokyiie bot sexty & iow he betokeis ten tynes more yat is sex hundryth (f. 137', 11-18).

Aiid write ye articul in ye lyftside: yf yat lii be a digit write yere a digit: yf yat häl be a composit write ye digit of ye composit Aiid ye articul in ye lyft side (f. 159', 20-24).

c) To introduce juxtaposed sentences:

\[
\ldots \text{floryermore yu inost kiow & take gode lieide in quych side yuschalhe be gyn in yis craft or ellis yu inayst spyl alle yl aber yere a bout a componste & refein yu schalt be gyn in the lyft side in yis Craft thenke welouer yis verse (f. 146', 6-12).}
\]

d) To introduce coordinate clauses:

Aiid write yere the digit of ye Composyt Aiid set ye articul of ye coinposit next
after ye digit in ye same rewe yf yere be no ino figures after But yf yere be mo figures after yat digit Aid yere he schalle be rekened for hym selfe And when yu schalt ade yot ylke figure yat herys yat articule ouer his lied to ye figure vieder hym [...] (f. 141', 19-26).

e) To introduce subordinate clauses (nominal, adjectival and adverbial); see, for instance, how the punctus is acting as a conjunctive device between the verb know and the nominal clause itself, especially because there happens to be an unbedded relative clause in-between.

[...] kiow yu after ye Sorsyd rewles yat I sayd a fore yat yere heii tltre spices of number One is a digit A noyer is all Articul & ye yore a Composyt [...] (f. 138', 10-14).

Adjectival subordination, in turn, is also punctuated, irrespective of the type of relativization (restrictive or non-restrictive). It is significant, however, that the punctuation of these types of clauses is not as consistent as the ones above, as there are many more unpunctuated instances in the text. The first two instances show examples of a restrictive and a non-restrictive relative clause while the last one shows a sentential relative. The writer's ultimate intention here is unequivocal as more often than not he makes use of the punctus especially in those cases where ambiguity may arise. For instance, in the second example the punctus is separating the first yat, which is a demonstrative, from the second, which is the relativizer itself, having two basic purposes: to avoid possible grammatical ambiguity on the one hand, and as a clue to read it with the appropriate intonation. In this same fashion, in the third instance we also observe how this symbol is used to signal the end of a relative clause and avoid the likely association of the phrase of a cifir, as the preposition depends on the verb of the subordinate clause:

[...] yu schal vindenstonde yat multiplication is a bryygiyd to gedur of 2 thynge in oii onmber ye quycli oii oinomber contynes so moiy tymes on howe moiy tymes yereben viytyes in ye nowmber of yat 2 (f. 153', 26-29 and f. 153', 1-2).

[...] yere fore do a way yat yat is odde ye quycli is 1 yeii leues 4 (f. 149', 21-22).

[...] & sett in ye saine place of ye quycli place yt tokest hym of a cifir for he was bot 1 (f. 144', 25-27).

The punctuation of adverbial subordination, in turn, is more consistent than in relative clauses, totalling 45 instances. This mark of punctuation appears with all types of clauses — of time, cause, result, contrast, manner, condition, comparison, etc. See the following examples:

Aid so forthe towards ye lyft syde of ye tabul or of ye boke yot ye figures beie writane In til yat ys come to the last figure yat is called a cifir. (f. 136', 31-34).

furthermore he most vindenstonde yat in yis crift ben ysd teeni figurys as here beie writen Sor ensimspul O 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 (f. 136', 15-17).

Aid yis rewle is generale foralle maner of articuls Whethir yai he hundryth or
bowsant: but ye most know well ye craft of ye wrhythyme in ye tabulle or you know to do yus in yi inynge aftur yis rewle (f. 162', 25-28 and f. 163', 1-2).

This same symbol is also used to mark off the fronting of a subordinate clause, as in the following instance:

[…] whaii yu hast a iioinbe- to write loke fyrst what maner noinbe- it ys yat yu schalt write whether it be a digit or a coinposit or all Articul (f. 138', 17-21).

f) To introduce a sequential marker:

[…] yu most know yat ye profet of yis craft is to telle what is ye holonbiri yat coines of diverse nomburs. Now as to ye texte of oure verse he techeth the how yu schal worcli in yis craft (f. 140', 23-27).

g) To call attention to what comes next:

Expoie yis verse. A cifre tokeis no37 bot he inakes ye figure to betoken yat coines after hym more yaii he schuld (f. 137', 5-7).

¶ This is ye Chapitre of subtraccion in the quycli you most kiiow foure iieszessary thynge: the first what is subtraccion ye secuide is how inoiiy nombers you inost have to subtraccion the thiryd is how inoiiy inaiiers of cases yere may happe at yis craft of subtraccion The foure is qwat is ye profet of yis craft (f. 142', 9-15).

h) To enunierate:

¶ Here telles yot yere bene · 7 · spices or portes of yis craft: The first is called addition ye secuide is called subtraccion the thiryd is called duplicacion The 4 · is called dimydicion The 5 · is called multiplication The 6 · is called division The 7 · is called extractioi of ye Rote. (f. 139', 8-14).

i) To mark off direct speech (especially for questions and answers): in these cases the scribe systematically makes use of the punctus to circumscribe the question itself, both initially and finally. The leading function of this mark is rhetorical as it is a clue for the reader to read it appropriately. Note also that the punctus may appear together with the paroeph.

Expoie ye too versus a fore yis pi-cseit craft ys called Algorismus in ye quycli we use teen figurys of Inde Questio ¶ Wyl yei tfigurs of Inde Solucion for as I have sayd a fore yai were fonde fyrst in liide of a kyngc of yat Cuiitire yot was called Algor (f. 136', 18-21 and f. 137', 1-2).

¶ Questio: In quycli syde sittes ye first figure: Solucion for sothe loke quich figure is first in ye rygi side of ye bok or of ye tabul (f. 136', 5-8).
i) To separate the members of a comparison:

$\ldots yu\ shal\ understonde\ yat\ multiplicacion\ is\ a\ bryngenge\ to\ gedur\ of\ 2\ thynge\ in\ on\ nombur\ ye\ quycy\ on\ nombur\ contynge\ so\ in\ nombur\ tyynes\ yere\ ben\ nynse\ in\ ye\ nynumber\ of\ yat\ 2\ (f.\ 153\',\ 26-29\ and\ f.\ 153\',\ 1-2)\ldots$

$\ldots yen\ loke\ how\ in\ nynber\ cifer\ s\ schuld\ ge\ be\ fore\ yat\ oii\ articuls\ and\ he\ were\ write\ Al\ nynber\ cifer\ s\ schuld\ ge\ be\ fore\ yat\ othir\ he\ were\ write\ of\ cifer\ s\ (f.\ 161\',\ 23-27)\ldots$

K4.2. The punctus at clause / phrase level

The punctus is also used to indicate intra-clausal relations: to introduce appositive phrases, to highlight an important constituent, to connect juxtaposed/coordinate phrases as well as to mark off the clause elements (subject and verb, verb and complements, etc.). The most immediate function of this mark is grammatical, the writer wanting to signal some sort of relationship between the clause constituents. The only exception is that of appositions, whose function could be both grammatical and rhetorical because a pause is implied.

Statistically and compared with other mediaeval prose compositions where these uses are rather frequent (Rodríguez-Álvarez, 1999: 35-42; Alonso-Almeida, 2002: 218-222; Calle-Martín, 2004b: 420-421), its occurrence is quite limited in MS Egerton 2622, where the scribe is more concerned with sentential boundaries. The different uses are reported below:

a) To introduce appositions:

Sorne nombur\ is\ called\ articul\ Latine.  A\ Articul\ in\ englys.  Some\ number\ is\ called\ a\ composit\ in\ englys\ (f.\ 138\',\ 7-10).

And\ rys\ one\ nombur\ schalle\ be\ called\ numerus\ multiplicans\ Anglice\ ye\ nynber\ multiplying\ for\ he\ schalle\ multiply\ ye\ hyer\ iounber\ (f.\ 154\',\ 12-15).

b) To mark off the clause constituents:

$\$\ As\ for\ ye\ secuiide\ you\ inost\ know\ yet\ you\ schalt\ have\ tweyne\ rewes\ of\ figures.\ on\ vndur\ a\ nother\ as\ here\ yu\ iiayst\ se\ (f.\ 140\',\ 18-20).

$\ldots\ loke\ how\ iioyites\ ben.\ by\ twene\ ye\ more\ digit\ and\ 10\ (f.\ 154\',\ 6-7)$

c) To highlight an important element of the clause:

The\ first\ is\ called\ addicion\ ye\ secunde\ is\ called\ subtraccion\ (f.\ 139\',\ 9-10).

d) To link juxtaposed/coordinate phrases:

Compositys\ ben\ noimbers\ yat\ bene\ coinpoiyt\ of\ a\ digyt\ &\ of\ an\ articul\ as\ fouretene\ lyfene\ sextene\ &\ such\ oyer\ (f.\ 138\',\ 1-3).

Likewise, the punctus has been found to express intraphrasal relations to separate the elements of the phrase and to indicate abbreviations, as in the following cases:
VI. CONCLUSIONS

In this study we have focused our attention on Steele’s edition of MS Egerton 2622 to show the number of mistranscriptions that it contains. It goes without saying, therefore, that editions like this one should not be recommended as primary sources for philological research. A call is made in this paper for trustworthy editions which offer a clear-cut picture of the original manuscript as originally composed.

On the grounds of punctuation, in our opinion, modern editors should pay more attention to the actual use of marks so that their transcriptions could be used for palaeographic and linguistic research. If the rendering needs to be modernized for publication, as seems to be the policy nowadays, a previous analysis of the scribal practice is recommended so as to ascertain the different uses of punctuation marks in the work being edited. This analysis will allow the editor to spot the different relationships of the symbols, whether sentential, clausal or phrasal, hence leading to a more consistent rendering. In this fashion, depending on the ultimate function of each symbol, the modern editor only needs to provide the most appropriate equivalent in modern punctuation. In such a way, Steele’s shortcomings, for instance, could have been avoided systematically.

To sum up, in our view, analyses of this kind are actually a must prior to the task of editing itself so that the final version, if modernized, has a coherent system of punctuation. There are, however, scholars who still question the importance of scribal punctuation. Reiner, for instance, argues that “there is little literature on mediaeval punctuation, partly because there is so much evidence which needs to be studied, and partly because editors of texts have considered the effort needed to be a waste (since usually the pointing is not authorial anyway)” (Reiner, 1998). Whether authorial or not, the study of punctuation is a need for the following reasons. The first has to do with the scribes’ systematicity in the use of marks of punctuation as there are structures which are always pointed, hence leading us to think that there was a consistent and orderly punctuation system at the time. The second has to do with the underlying function of mediaeval punctuation which, in our opinion, is of a prosodical nature. This issue is still under-researched and, in the long run, the publication of other approaches of this kind will allow us not only to have a more comprehensive account of the scribal practices concerning punctuation, but also to obtain a wider perspective on the relationship between prosody and punctuation.
NOTES

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2. All the instances reproduced below come from our own transcription wherein abbreviations have been silently expanded in italics.

REFERENCES


