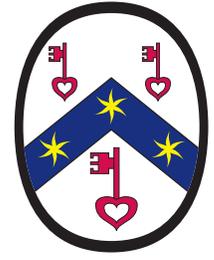# Style Manifesto

The Research Group on Manuscript Evidence promotes a principled, unified approach to its publications. Foremost among these principles is that form and content must be appropriate for function and audience.

Spelling, Punctuation, Citations and the Like

There is no single set of rules concerning such practices as spelling, punctuations, abbreviations, or bibliographical citations. For a given publication, they may be better determined, for example, by the intention of a primarily English or American usage. Once adopted, however, such conventions should be consistent through a single publication, or portion thereof by a single author (who may have reasons to prefer one or other usage). Unless otherwise specified, *The Chicago Manual of Style* is followed for American usage, and *Hart's Rules for Compositors and Readers* for English. Publications in, or also in, other languages similarly follow their established standards.

Fonts

The Research Group has selected **Bembino** as its preferred font in which to sets its publications. The font was developed for, and donated to, the Group specifically to meets its requirements for Style and Layout.

The choice of a traditional serifed font maximizes legibility. Avoiding potential confusion, **Bembino** offers distinct forms for the glyphs uppercase–I, lowercase–l and digit–1, and distinguishes between uppercase–O and digit–0. **Bembino** is available in five weights (**bold**, **semibold**, **halfbold**, **medium** and regular), and three styles (upright, *italic* and *cursive*). Together with extended character sets (fi–ligatures, en – and em — dashes, ø and other multinational characters) and script systems (latin, Ελληνικά, العربية, עברית, Русский, fənɛtɪks), these features give sufficient range for professional-quality academic or other publishing.

Among commercially-available fonts, **Adobe Garamond** remains the Research Group's preferred alternative when **Bembino** cannot be used. When used with the 'Expert' additional fonts, that font contains many of the features required by the *Style Manifesto*.

Except for specimens used to demonstrate particular letter-forms, the Research Group avoids fake or pseudo-archaizing fonts (especially in titling and display work). For setting Old or Middle English, **Bembino** contains the additional characters (including ƿ, 3, ꝥ, þ) needed accurately to transcribe them, rather than, say, forcing the anachronistic use of w (for ƿ).

Justification and Word-Spacing

In keeping with a principled approach to clarity of comprehension, the Research Group recognizes that both horizontal and vertical white space plays an important rôle in visual perception. Following this principle, we use letter kerning to preserve the visual integrity of individual words, single spaces between words, and increased space only between sentences or after colon punctuation.

We favor double spaces between sentences. In a proportionally-spaced font, the width of a single space is usually less than the width of most glyphs, so the extra space helps guide the reader to the correct end of the sentence. The second space is not added following abbreviations within sentences (*i.e., e.g.,* and the like) which also aids

in parsing the text (particularly if the language being read is not familiar to the reader). Also, since sentences typically start with an upper-case, enlarged, or distinguished letter, the additional space before the glyph reduces the sensation of 'crowding' around that point in the text.

Our publications employ justification only at a single margin: usually at the left, but at the right for Hebrew, Arabic, and so on. Three related aspects of perception underlie this decision.

1) The non-uniform right margin aids the eye in moving from line to line, thereby reducing errors due to eye-skip caused by loss of registration.

2) Right justification introduces falsely variable spaces between words, and these random differences impose meaningless disruptions both to perception and to syntactic analysis.

3) Large gaps correlated across multiple lines give the appears of "rivers" of white space which further distract from the content of the text.

Vertical Line- and Paragraph-Spacing

As a Group, we seek to make the best use of technology in conveying our message. This dedication extends to the use of computer-based desktop-publishing tools. In particular, the typewriter-based approach of uniform line spacing is no longer a constraint. We favor varying vertical white space, especially to emphasize groupings. Thus paragraph spacings should be less than a full line-height, and more white space should be placed *above* a section heading than *below* it. Conversely, a caption below a figure should be set closer to the figure than to any following text.

Fine control of vertical spacing is one of the distinguishing features of professional typesetting programs, as compared with older 'word-processing' style applications. We have found Adobe's **Creative Suite 'InDesign'** program to be one that supports all our requirements. It is our preferred application for setting texts for publication.

Foreign Languages and Scripts

The presentation of material not originally written in English must be determined by the intended readership of the text. Following our principles of transparency, we seek to present evidence in its original form and language as far as possible. In keeping with our policy of accessibility, we also require that such evidence be easily understood by our readers. Authors writing for a specialist audience, for example biblical scholars or philologists, may assume familiarity with Latin, French, and German, and leave quotations and references untranslated.

For other languages, or less specialized articles, a translation into English should be provided as well as the original. Depending on the nature of the text, and its length, this translation may be:

a1)   Inline '... a constant theme of "Der Process" (The Trial)'

a2)   Inline '... a constant theme of Kafka's "The Trial" (Der Process)'

b)   Inset paragraph, native followed by translation

c)   Native inline, translation as a footnote

d)   Translation inline, native in a footnote

Forms a2 and d are preferred for introductory or elementary texts, where unfamiliarity with the language would be the norm rather than the exception. The original version should be omitted only for very brief notes or when space is constrained. References to Journals and Titles of Publications should always be cited including their original form, to aid the reader wishing to locate them.
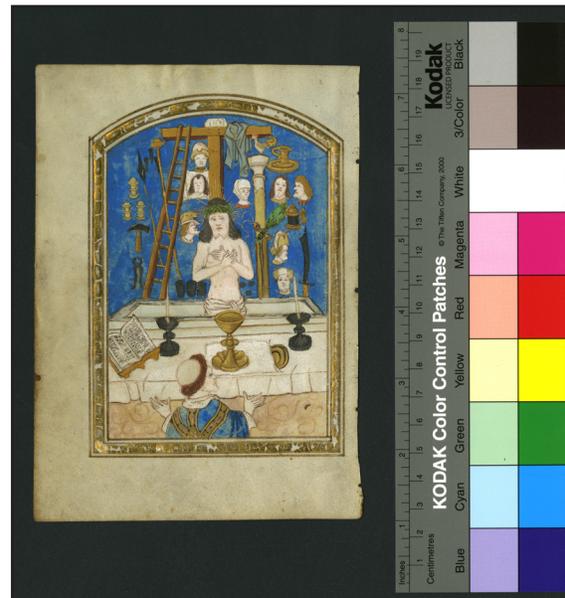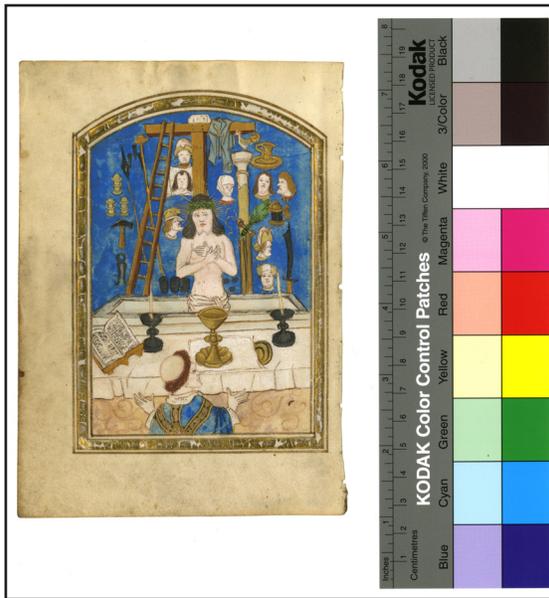
'Night' and 'Day'   Two views of the same page, unretouched, with the same lighting, but different backgrounds. The preceived differences are apparent, while the color guide remains unchanged. (Photography © Mildred Budny, reproduced with permission)

The same principles apply to texts in non-Latin scripts, with the added option of supplying transliterations where appropriate. Transliterations should follow standard practices for the script or language, into Latin letters (not phonetic transcriptions). The purpose of the transcription is to aid a reader in understanding and remembering a word or phrase by associating it to a sound value. Again, for specialist audiences, this may be unneccessary.

Native scripts (Greek, Cyrillic, etc.) should be used where possible, unless the glyphs are not available, or there is a well-established conventional transcription (as with Ethiopic) that is generally preferred. Large blocks of transliterated text should be avoided where other forms are also used. Transliterations rarely aid the reader who does not already know the script or language, and they are redundant for readers who can understand the original. However, transliterations should always be provided when the sound of the text is an essential component of the argument. For example consider:

> "Typhoon" is derived from 台風

compared to:

> "Typhoon is derived from the Japanese 台風 (tai-fū, great wind).

A reader who understands the first sentence unadorned probably already knew the derivation.

Journal names in References should always be transliterated. The transliteration may help with searching online or in forming the correct pronounciation when requesting the journal in person.

Reproduction of Photographs

The Research Group seeks to illustrate its publications with reproductions of the works under discussion. We wish to encourage readers to examine such plates and compare them against the commentary, so as both to judge the assessments and to offer their own refinements.

With this aim in mind, photographs of manuscripts and similar materials deserve to be treated as representations of primary witnesses. Aside from special techniques, such as the use of back-lighting, different backgrounds, and so on, any distortion of photographic evidence should be avoided. We acknowledge that some cases may call

for image-enhancement better to reveal or to highlight features less visible under normal conditions, as with layered, palimpsested scripts or the offsets of adjacent elements which have been lost or moved. Nevertheless, the "cosmetic" approach, which includes touching up to remove features deemed as blemishes, and masking the text surrounding images or initials, has no place in our publications.

Our goal is to present as much of the evidence as we can, set in its widest context. We deplore the "scrapbook" approach as such, which presents cutout portions of pages amounting to no more than thumbnail clippings, at varying scales with little or no indication of surroundings. Sometimes photographs of details are desirable, but in general we encourage the reproduction of whole pages, without cropping, extending to the surviving margins and edges. Reproducing whole pages respects the artefact and its state of survival, following the depredations which have occurred through trimming, wear and tear, and other intrusions.

Where appropriate, we also encourage adding a scale ruler and a standard color guide when taking photographs. When photographs are not reproduced at actual size (particularly through Web-based publications), the scale ruler presents clear evidence of the size of the original image. The color guide is invaluable for serious scholars wishing to compare pigmentation across multiple images from various sources and to assess the accuracy, or otherwise, of the version as presented on screen or in print. Without such a guide, the integrity of the presented form cannot be determined, and may lead to false conclusions. Since the color guide is an integral part of the image, captured at the same time, it supplies direct evidence of the lighting used. It can also determine if the surface of the page is discolored, through age or exposure, or if the image color palette is due to conservation-friendly reduced lighting conditions.

These aspects allow a single photograph to carry, and to interrelate, evidence of interest across multiple disciplines or areas of interest, beyond a single specialty. This position fosters the integrated approach which the Research Group seeks to promote.

The **Bembino** font pack, comprising 16 separate fonts and a descriptive booklet, may be downloaded, for free, from the Research Group website at **manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/bembino/.**
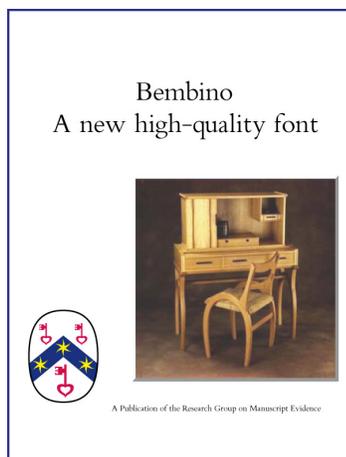
Bembino
A new high-quality font

A Publication of the Research Group on Manuscript Evidence

The Research Group exists to apply an integrated approach to the study of manuscripts and other forms of the written or inscribed word, in their transmission across time and space.
The *Style Manifesto* joins our other Publications (**http://www.manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/ profile/publications**), both online and in print.