

## French guillemets in $\Omega$

John Plaice

School of Computer Science and Engineering  
The University of New South Wales  
Sydney 2052, Australia  
plaice@cse.unsw.edu.au  
<http://www.cse.unsw.edu.au/~plaice>

Yannis Haralambous

Atelier Fluxus Virus  
187, rue Nationale  
F-59800 Lille, France  
yannis@fluxus-virus.com  
<http://www.fluxus-virus.com>

The  $\Omega$  system allows one to finetune the layout of a paragraph, using what we call *local* paragraph primitives. Currently we use two:

- `\localleftbox{typeset-material}`:  
The typeset material will be placed at the beginning of every line that follows the occurrence of this primitive in the text.
- `\localrightbox{typeset-material}`:  
The typeset material will be placed at the end of every line that follows the occurrence of this primitive in the text.

Each time that one of these primitives appears in a paragraph, a *whatsit* node is deposited in the text stream, recording this new value. The values associated with the primitives can be changed several times in a paragraph, which means that several *whatsit* nodes will be placed in the paragraph. The effects of these primitives are local to the part of the paragraph that they affect. Finally, grouping is respected by all of the local paragraph primitives.

The local box primitives place fixed-width typeset material at the beginning (or the end) of every line in a paragraph. « The problem to be solved was « for fine French typesetting, in which second-level « guillemets are placed running down the left side of « a paragraph, as in this paragraph, so long as ma- « terial is being quoted. » Since  $\TeX$  breaks paragraphs in arbitrary places, no robust macro package can place the guillemets in the right positions.

The text for the previous paragraph was:

The local box primitives place fixed-width typeset material at the beginning (or the end) of every line in a paragraph. `{<<~\localleftbox{<<~}`The problem to be solved was for fine French

typesetting, in which second-level guillemets are placed running down the left side of a paragraph, as in this paragraph, so long as material is being quoted.~>>} Since  $\TeX$  breaks paragraphs in arbitrary places, no robust macro package can place the guillemets in the right positions.

In fact, the above typewritten paragraph itself was laid out as:

```
{\tt
\localleftbox{\quad}
\localrightbox{\quad}
\begin{flushleft}
...
\end{flushleft}
}
```

Guillemets on every line occur also in other typographies, inspired from the French one. Take for example the following extract from a 1885 book on Roman Law (Σύστημα Ρωμαϊκού Δικαίου, υπό Π. Καλλιγᾶ, Ἀθήναι 1885):

Εἰς κληρικοὺς καὶ μοναχοὺς ἀπηγορεύθη ἡ μίσθωσις ἀλλοτρίων κτημάτων, ἢ τελῶν, πλὴν ἐκκλησιαστικῶν, « ἵνα μὴ διὰ ταύτης τῆς προ- » φάσεως καὶ τοῖς ἀγίοις οἴκοις ζημία γένηται, » καὶ αἱ θεῖαι ὑπηρεσίαι ἐμποδίζονται ».

Note that the guillemets placed at the beginning of every line are closing ones.

On the other hand, the 1919 Duden, explicitly forbids quotes on every line:

„... fo dürfen diese [die Anführungszeichen] nur am Anfang und am Ende des Ganzen gefetzt werden, nicht bei jedem Absatz oder gar bei jeder Zeile.“