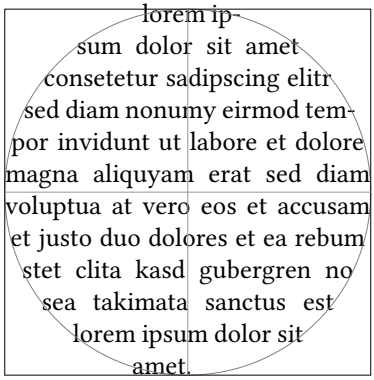
Colophons /ˈkɒləfon/ & shaped paragraphs in SILE

Where to start this document about colophons and paragraph shaping? Galileo, in 1638, wrote:

The area of
a circle is a mean pro-
portional between any two reg-
ular and similar polygons of which
one circumscribes it and the other is iso-
perimetric with it. In addition, the area of
the circle is less than that of any circum-
scribed polygon and greater than that of any
isoperimetric polygon. And further, of these
circumscribed polygons, the one that has
the greater number of sides has a smaller
area than the one that has a lesser num-
ber; but, on the other hand, the iso-
perimetric polygon that has the
greater number of sides
is the larger.

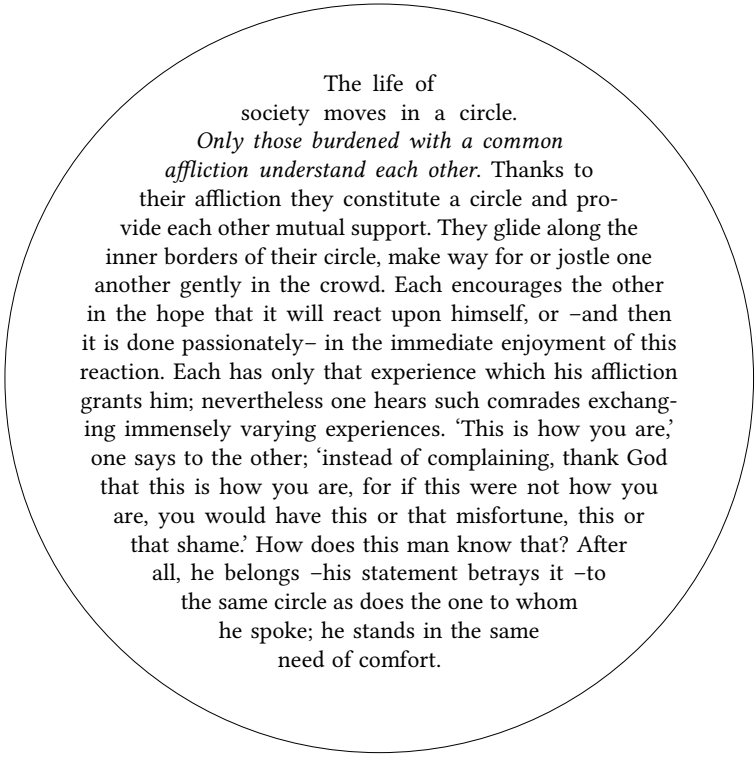
It looks cool, perhaps, but typesetting text in a circle, however, is difficult. The first and last lines do not have much place to play with. Even with hyphenation, one is no guaranteed that the text can be broken at appropriate places. And one cannot be sure the last line, anyway, by nature incomplete, can fit well in a circle. What if, morevover, one wants to display some sort of ornament around a circular-shaped paragraph, not knowing beforehand how it will look? Spaces in a line can be streched or shrinked. Let us try and debug:



This is not too bad, is it?

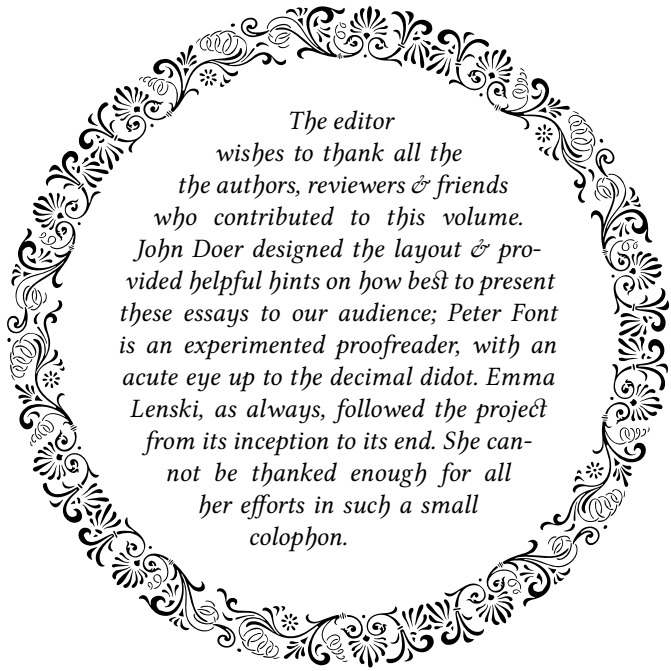
Quoting Wikipedia, a colophon (/ˈkɒləfon/) is a brief statement containing information about the publication of a book such as the place of publication, the publisher, and the date of publication. Colophons are usually printed at the ends of books. The term colophon derives from the Late Latin *colophōn*, from the Greek *κολοφών* (meaning "summit" or "finishing touch"). The existence of colophons can be dated back to antiquity.

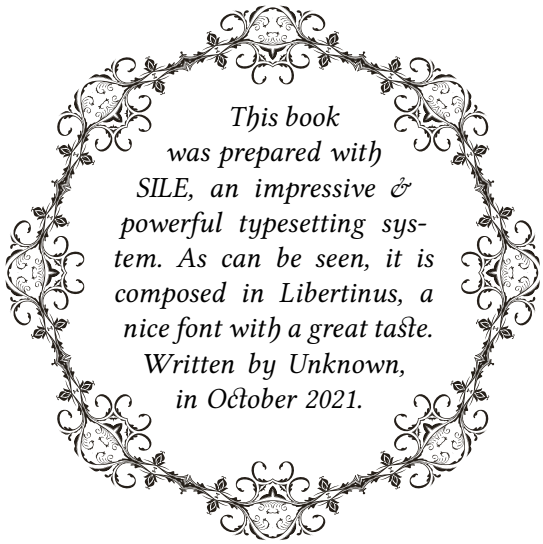
It is quite common for colophons to be surrounded by some sort of ornament. While regular paragraphs are composed of square-shaped blocks, colophons may take various shapes. Can we automated their presentation with SILE in a successful way? Honestly, the ways to do so can be fragile, with a lot of underlying assumptions, and sometimes some manual "tweaks" may be needed. Let us quote Franz Kafka, from his *Diaries*, 1910–1923:



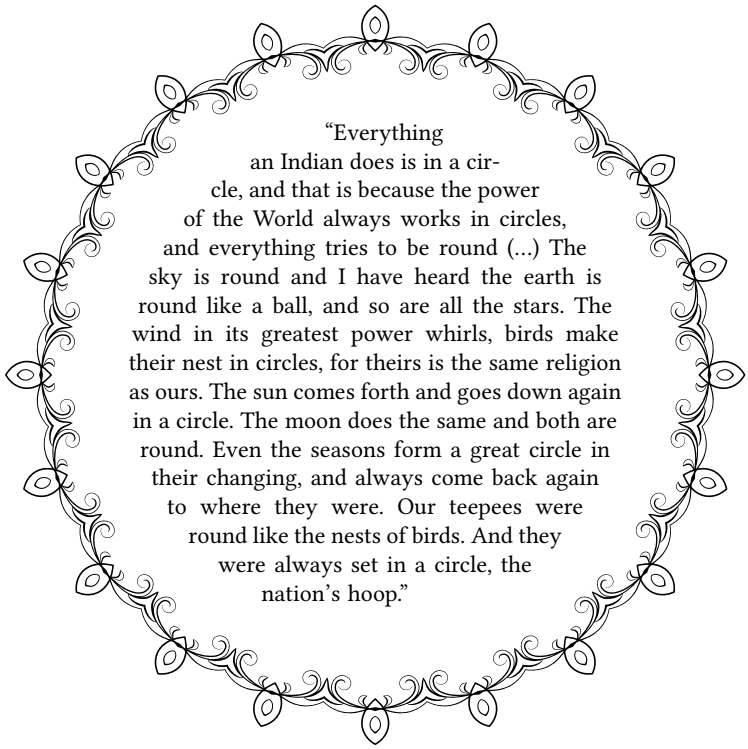
It still looks decent? Obviously, any long text has more chances to look fine when shaped into a circle. This type of colophon might not be appropriate for short statements.

A few traditional colophons.

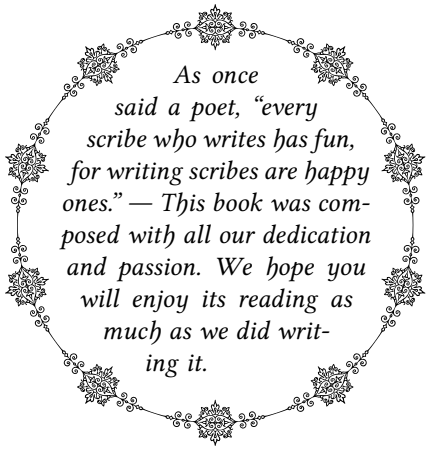




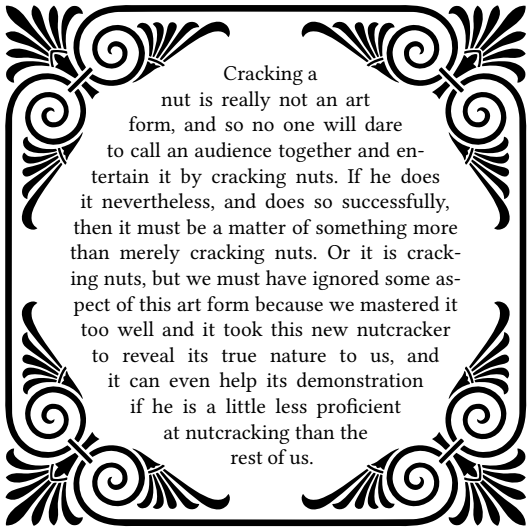
Chief Black Elk was wise. He had someting to say regarding circles.

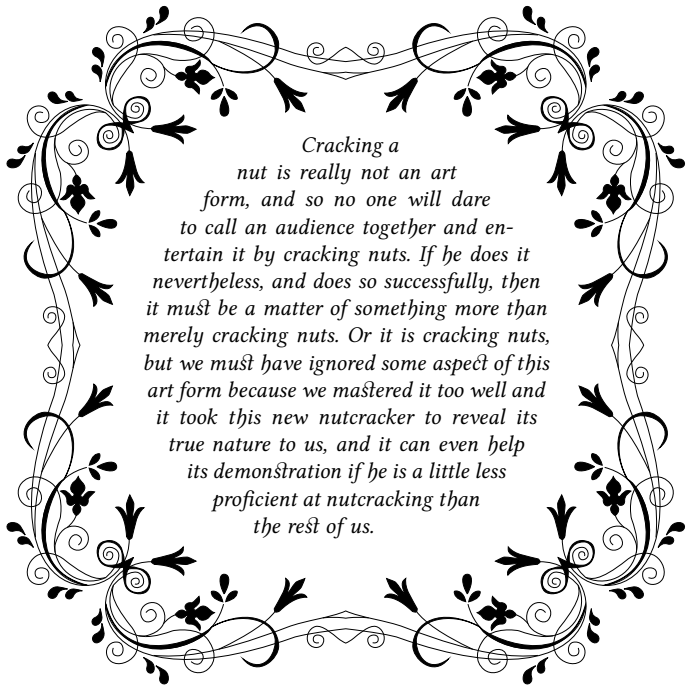


An expressive colophon, now.



As Franz Kafka wrote in *Josephine the Singer, or the Mouse Folk*...





And thus, we have finished.