

Preface

In olden days, the author of a critical edition would give his manuscript – often literally handwritten – to a publisher, who would select a fine typesetter to transform the work into a complex and beautiful book. The work might contain several scripts, such as Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and it would have a particularly complicated and specialized layout. But with widespread changes in the modalities of higher education and of book production, the skills of typesetting critical editions have now almost completely vanished, and this scenario just does not exist any more. Today, an author or publisher with a critical edition on his hands has, until now, had nowhere to turn.

The following programs, written in the \TeX macro language, solve this special set of problems in document formatting. If you don't need to make a critical edition, then you can happily live the rest of your life without ever having to think about EDMAC. But if you do need to create a critical edition, i.e., something that looks like the examples at the end of this book, then your need for something like EDMAC will be acute.

The connected and rather thorny problems which EDMAC solves are, to our knowledge, not soluble by any other text-processing system. Several word-processors will do automatic line numbering, but none will allow you to use line numbers to reference footnotes. Some special word-processors will allow up to three separate layers of notes at the bottom of each page, but none will allow the five or more which EDMAC offers, and none offers the choice of having footnotes in multiple columns and paragraphs.

For these and other reasons, EDMAC does a unique job. But perhaps EDMAC inherits some of the thorniness of the problems it solves. In fact, the logic of EDMAC is straightforward once mastered, and the interface is flexible and key commands can be redefined or renamed to fit your particular project as closely as possible. But to get the best from EDMAC, you do need to be comfortable with your computer's operating system, and with \TeX . In other words, EDMAC can be demanding to use; but then, it is also very rewarding.

The interface of EDMAC was designed and refined at about the same time that the Text Encoding Initiative was active in designing SGML definitions for critical editions and similar types of document. While the two projects are separate, they are aware of each other and in some respects complement each other, EDMAC providing a method for the output of complex texts that have been prepared with TEI/SGML markup.

Finally, we have the pleasant opportunity of thanking all those who have helped and advised us in writing EDMAC. EDMAC could not exist without the foundation of \TeX , so our first thanks goes to \TeX 's creator, Don Knuth. We also thank Wayne Sullivan, one of the early implementors of \TeX on the Intel microprocessor, who as both a demanding user and contributor to the programs has made EDMAC much more useful than it would have been without his sophisticated contributions. Ron Whitney read the macros carefully,

and suggested several important improvements and optimizations, as well as working on the production of the book. We are very grateful to the early users of EDMAC, whose several improvements and corrections to the code are mentioned in the log at the beginning of the `edmac.doc` file. Sebastian Rahtz has done the final work of typesetting and publishing the book on behalf of the T_EX Users Group.

We should also like to thank the T_EX Users Group itself for publishing EDMAC as a book. At the time of writing, electronic publications and programs, especially in the Humanities, have not been adequately integrated into the process of professional accreditation and evaluation. This publication gives us an opportunity to gain credit for this work in the traditional, publication-oriented academic circles in which we are both employed.

Finally, we hope this book will help to bring EDMAC and T_EX to the attention of text editors who would not otherwise have become aware that there existed a solution to their problems.

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