On the Stochastic Deposition of *Sesamum indicum* Seeds on Scholarly Manuscripts

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The `sesameseeds` package by M. Fatih Toy and Tunçer Baykaş
`https://biocil.github.io/fun/sesameseeds/`

Abstract

Coffee is not the only thing academics spill on papers. We present `sesameseeds`, a LaTeX package that decorates every page of a document with the debris left behind by a simit – the Turkish sesame-crusted bread ring – eaten over the manuscript: oven-roasted sesame seeds and crumbs of caramelised crust. Deposition is random but reproducible, so the mess is identical on every compilation and survives peer review. Users can also sprinkle seeds by hand, protect a page with a napkin, and leave the ring of debris shed by a simit that was put down on the page during a phone call.

1 Introduction

The coffee stain has long been the canonical marker of a manuscript that was actually read. In Istanbul, however, the reading snack of choice is the simit, sold from red carts on every ferry pier. Before baking, the dough ring is dipped in *pekmez* (grape molasses) and rolled in sesame: the pekmez makes the seeds stick and caramelises in the oven into the dark, glossy crust, while the seeds roast to a deep golden brown. The finished simit is dry and leaves no stain, but it is structurally incapable of being eaten without shedding seeds onto whatever lies beneath it. Reviewers, supervisors and thesis committees who annotate printouts over breakfast know the result well: a drift of roasted seeds collecting in the margins, a few over-roasted ones, and crumbs of crust lodged next to the equation that took the longest to understand.

This package brings that authenticity to digital documents. Unlike a coffee stain, sesame seeds are not a single event: they accumulate on every page, cluster where the simit was held, and occasionally bounce into the most inconvenient place possible.

2 Usage

Load the package in the preamble. Every page then receives its share of seeds automatically; no second compilation is needed for this.

```
\usepackage[mess=medium]{sesameseeds}
```

Settings can be changed later with `\sesamesetup{...}`, which affects all pages shipped out afterwards. A page is kept clean with `\nosesame`, and the automatic mess is stopped and resumed with `\sesameoff` and `\sesameon`. Debris can also be placed by hand; coordinates

*Who read the first draft on the Kadıköy–Karaköy ferry, simit in hand.

Key	Default	Meaning
`mess`	`medium`	`none`, `light`, `medium`, `heavy`, `catastrophic`
`off`	–	disable everything, hand-placed debris included
`seeds`	–	fixed number of seeds per page
`probability`	0.8	chance that a page gets anything at all
`randomseed`	1525	change it for a different, still reproducible, mess
`crumbs`	`true`	crust crumbs
`layer`	`foreground`	seeds over (`foreground`) or under the text
`firstpage`	`true`	allow mess on the title page
`size`	1	seed size multiplier
`spread`	2.5cm	size of the fall-out zone
`stray`	0.2	fraction of seeds that bounced away
`roast`	0.5	golden (0) to deep-brown (1) roast
`black`	0	fraction of black sesame seeds
`crumbratio`	0.35	crumbs per seed
`shadow`	0.28	shadow opacity
`count`	15 / 60	seeds per `\sesamesprinkle` / `\simitring`
`radius`	6.5cm	radius of a `\simitring`
`angle`	`random`	orientation of a `\sesameseed`

Table 1: Options, usable in `\usepackage[...]`, `\sesamesetup` and the optional argument of the manual commands.

are measured from the lower-left corner of the page, and these commands use TikZ's `remember picture`, so compile twice:

```
\sesamesprinkle[count=25, spread=1.5cm]{14cm}{6cm}
\simitring[radius=6cm]{10.5cm}{15cm}
\sesameseed[angle=30, roast=0.9]{3cm}{3cm}
```

3 The deposition model

Let $W \times H$ be the paper size. For each page p the package seeds its own pseudo-random stream with s_0 (the `randomseed`) and p, so the debris does not depend on how many random numbers the rest of the document consumed. With probability π (`probability`) the page is eaten over at all, in which case the number of seeds is

$$N \sim \mathcal{U}\{n_{\min}, \dots, n_{\max}\}, \tag{1}$$

with the bounds set by `mess`. A fraction $\approx \sigma_s$ (`stray`) of them bounces off and lands uniformly anywhere on the page. The rest fall in one or, with probability 0.3, two fall-out zones, centred at $\mathbf{c}$. Because the simit moves while it is being eaten, each zone is an elongated Gaussian with a random orientation θ:

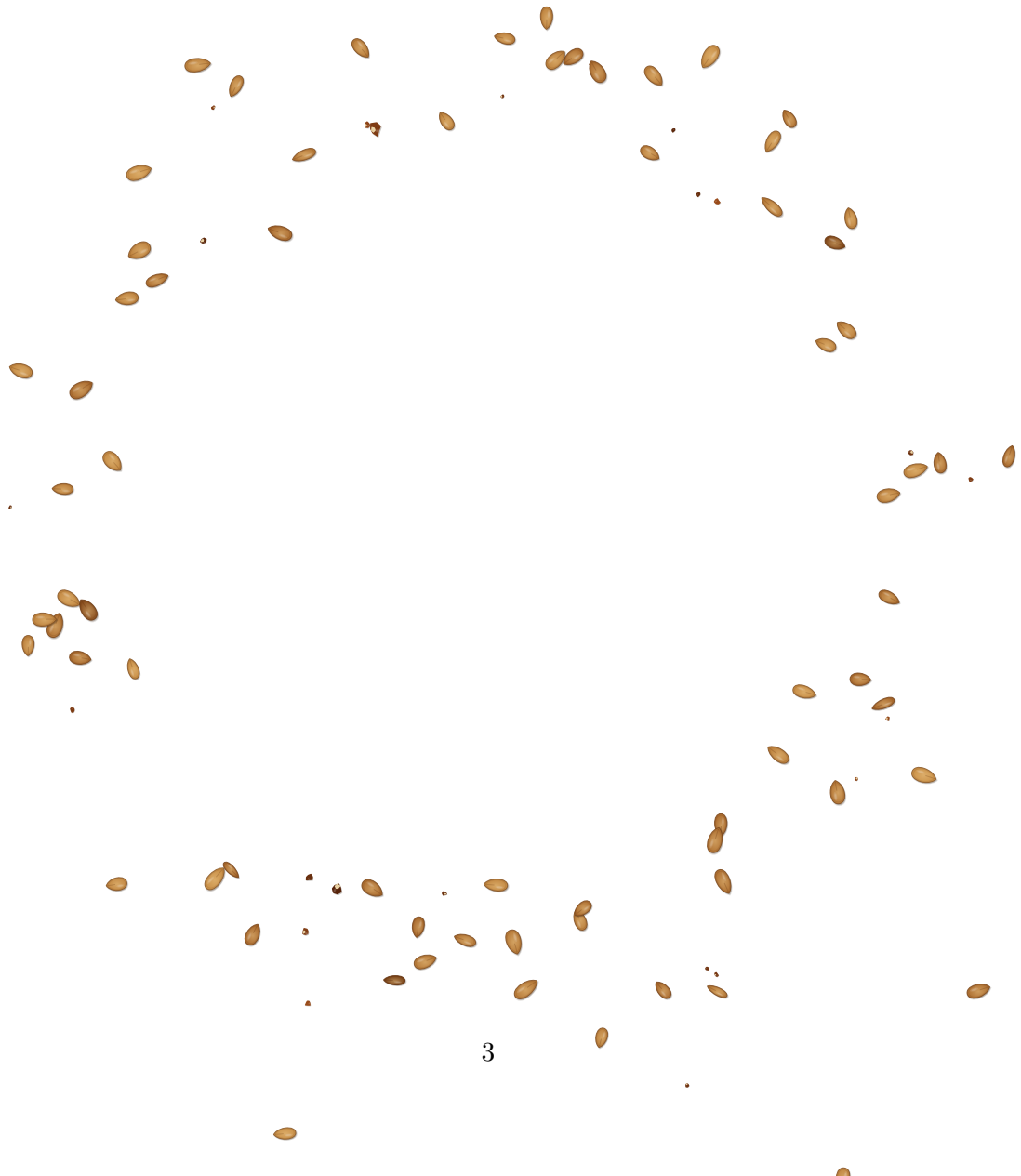
$$\mathbf{x}_i = \mathbf{c} + R(\theta) \begin{pmatrix} a\,\xi_i \\ b\,\eta_i \end{pmatrix}, \qquad \xi_i, \eta_i \sim \mathcal{N}(0,1), \tag{2}$$

where a and b are random multiples of `spread`. Seeds that were baked together onto the caramelised crust come off in pairs with probability 0.08, and about one seed in sixteen sat on the hot tray and is clearly darker. Each seed is drawn with a random orientation, size, aspect ratio (seeds resting on a crumb look narrower) and degree of roasting, together with a soft contact shadow. Crumbs of crust, some showing the soft white inside, are scattered around the same centres, slightly closer to the hand.

4 Results

Figure-free evidence is provided by the present page, on which the author put the simit down to answer a phone call. Since a baked simit is dry, it leaves no stain; what remains (`\simitring`) is a ring of seeds and crumbs that came off where it touched the paper and when it was picked up again. Note that a hand-made simit is never perfectly round; the package accounts for this with a small random ellipticity.

The deposition is robust across engines: pdfLaTeX, XeLaTeX and LuaLaTeX place the same debris in the same spots. Pages that a reviewer printed in black and white will show grey seeds, which is also realistic.



5 Protecting a page

This page was read with a napkin underneath. It carries a single `\nosesame` and therefore no seeds at all. The command works like `\thispagestyle`: it applies to the page on which TEX is working when the command is read, so put it near the top of the page you want to protect.

A whole section can be protected with `\sesameoff` … `\sesameon`. The package option `off` disables everything, hand-placed debris included, which is recommended for the camera-ready version. Or not.

6 Conclusion

We have shown that sesame seeds are a viable, reproducible and culturally specific alternative to coffee stains. Future work includes the *açma* and *poğaça* extensions, butter fingerprints, and a `tea` option that leaves a small ring under a tulip-shaped glass.

Acknowledgements. The author thanks the simit seller at the ferry pier, and the seagulls, who removed most of the evidence.

A Reading while the ferry crosses a wake

When the ferry meets the wake of a passing tanker, the reader's hand makes a sudden, involuntary motion and the simit releases a large fraction of its remaining seeds at once. This appendix was typeset with

```
\sesamesetup{mess=catastrophic, spread=3cm}
```

plus one extra `\sesamesprinkle` near the bottom right corner, where the seagull was looking.

Readers who need an even messier document can combine `mess=catastrophic` with `black=0.2` for a simit that was sold next to a black-sesame one, or with `layer=background` if the seeds were already on the desk before the paper was put down.