

ANTI LETTERPRESS

What happens when we take the ink back?

Disasters



Building it

...the people, the people

...the people, the people

Asia

...the people, the people

...the people, the people

Sudan sinks into hell

...the people, the people

...the people, the people

Middle East & Africa

Now what?

...the people, the people

...the people, the people

United States

...the people, the people

...the people, the people

Pick a camel!

Mr Khameh and Mr Trump

...the people, the people

...the people, the people

Pages of 1949

A greener continent?

...the people, the people

...the people, the people

DOUBLE
SAND
TAPE

PVA

PAPIER
MACHE
GLUE

GORILLA
GLUE

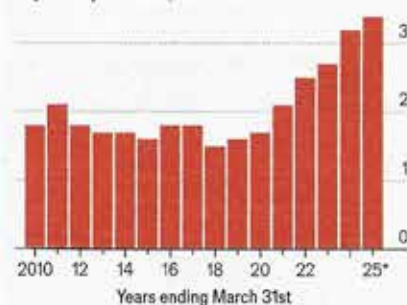
POW
STICKER

**ALL PURPOSE
WALLPAPER
ADHESIVE**

Easy mix formula

→ A big surprise

India, central-government capital expenditure, % of GDP



Sources: Haver Analytics; Ministry of Finance *2024/25 estimate

► sustainable. The government is keen to reduce its budget deficit, aiming to trim it to 4.5% of GDP in the 2025-26 fiscal year. It also has other claimants to appease. After the failure of Mr Modi's party to win an outright majority in elections in 2024, his government now depends on coalition partners, who may have expensive ideas of their own. So far the new government has resisted the temptation for crowd-pleasing handouts. But the pressure will grow if the ruling coalition suffers any setbacks in upcoming state elections. Both Delhi, the capital, and Bihar, one of the country's poorest states, go to the polls in 2025.

Given the government's constraints, investment spending must now come from companies. The coming year will reveal whether private firms agree. Many of India's big conglomerates seem ready to do their bit. S&P Global reckons Indian conglomerates could invest about \$800bn over the next ten years, almost three times the amount they invested over the past decade. About 40% of this will be in emerging industries such as green hydrogen, chipmaking, data centres and electric vehicles.

It should also become clearer in 2025 whether this mobilisation of capital will help mobilise labour. India's workforce is growing, but many people are stuck in unpaid jobs for small family firms. And millions who went back into agriculture during the covid-19 pandemic have yet to return to the cities.

Nehru's growth strategy was criticised for prioritising heavy industry, rather than light manufacturing and other labour-intensive sectors that could have absorbed more of India's vast, underemployed workforce. In July 2025, Mr Modi's term as prime minister will exceed 11 years and two months. At that point only Nehru himself will have enjoyed a longer continuous period in office. If Mr Modi is ever to catch India's first prime minister, he will have to create better-paying jobs for the voters who gave him his. ●

Indian conglomerates could invest \$800bn

Building it

MUMBAI

At last, a boom in Indian infrastructure

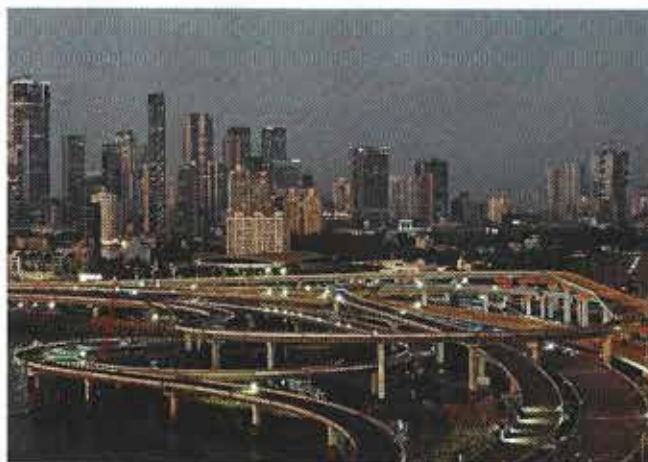
Leo Mirani Asia correspondent
The Economist

UPON TAKING office as India's prime minister in 2014, Narendra Modi's government immediately boosted infrastructure spending. Many state and local governments followed suit. The country desperately needed it. Urban infrastructure has endured years of neglect even as cities expanded in size and population.

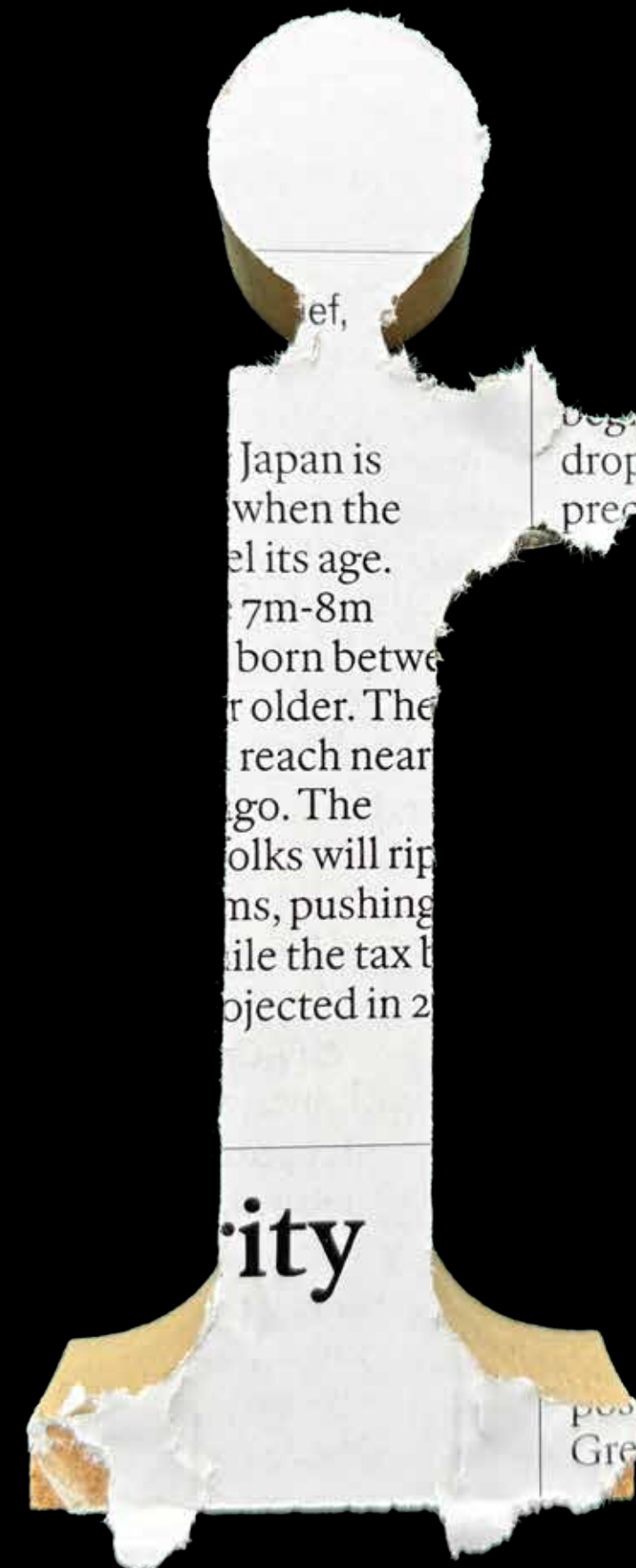
Nowhere is this more so than Mumbai, the commercial capital. Home to 22m people, India's richest city had long been an embarrassment, with gridlocked roads, packed trains and an airport at capacity. In 2025 some of the city's new infrastructure projects will, at last, be completed. Perhaps the most awaited will be a new metro line. It will connect the city's southern tip to other business districts and the airport is expected to be fully operational by the end of 2025. It will be Mumbai's first mass-transit link to the existing airport.

Another much-anticipated project is a coastal road running along the city's west coast, part of which opened in 2024. The plan is to use the road, built on reclaimed land, to link the west with a bridge on the east of the city, in turn connecting the Mumbai peninsula to the mainland. A 10km road will be completed in 2025, with 175 acres of new parks and seaside promenades alongside it.

Arguably the most impressive infrastructure project to be completed in 2025 will be a vast new airport on the city's outskirts. Mumbai's existing airport has one usable runway and is in the middle of the city. The completion of these projects will build upon a decade of ribbon-cuttings in 2014. More are on the way, including a high-speed rail link to Ahmedabad, an economic hub, and a motorway to Delhi, the capital. To pay for all this, and similar projects across the country, India has in recent years turbocharged public investment. A record 11trn rupees (\$130bn), or 3.4% of GDP, was set aside for infrastructure in the year to the end of March 2025, three times the annual amount of a decade ago. Much more spending and building will be necessary to expand India's economy and boost the living standards of its people. But the pace is picking up.



↑ No jams tomorrow





Sudan sinks into hell

NAIROBI

The world's biggest humanitarian disaster will continue to be ignored

Tom Gardner Africa correspondent, *The Economist*

NO CITY IN Sudan besides the capital, Khartoum, is more fiercely fought over than el-Fasher, in the western region of Darfur. For much of 2024 it was under siege by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), a paramilitary group that has spent more than 18 months trying to vanquish the regular Sudanese army, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), and seize control of the state. As a result, el-Fasher is where the famine that now threatens to consume the whole country began. Because of the intensity of the fighting there, it is also a useful place to look to understand where the conflict, which is possibly the biggest and most devastating anywhere in the world today, might be heading next.

As this article was published, el-Fasher remained the SAF's last urban stronghold in Darfur. All its other garrisons in the region had been captured by the RSF many months earlier. Observers had long expected the city's fall, followed by ethnic cleansing of local black

African ethnic groups by the mostly Arab RSF. Hundreds of thousands of civilians have already fled, joining the more than 20% of the country's pre-war population of 50m who have been forced to flee their homes since the war began in April 2023.

But despite the RSF's superior weaponry and numbers, the SAF has clung on in el-Fasher, and elsewhere too. The RSF's rapid eastward and southward advances in the first half of 2024 got bogged down by the summer rains. In the far south, it got tied up in a three-way struggle with the army and a local rebel movement. And in Khartoum and its surroundings, the SAF gradually began to win back territory it had lost in the early months of the war. At the start of 2024, Muhammad Hamdan Dagalo, the RSF's notorious commander (better known as Hemedti), made a triumphant tour of the region's capitals, spurring talk of a total RSF victory. That now seems much less likely.

Instead, Sudan's civil war will probably grow even more brutal, complex and difficult to resolve. As in el-Fasher, where various local Darfuri armed groups have been fighting alongside the SAF, self-defence groups and militias will proliferate elsewhere. These include jihadist brigades linked to the army, as well units composed of former members of Sudan's feared national intelligence services. In areas liberated from the RSF in the second half of 2024, these forces were reportedly responsible for brutal repression and reprisal attacks. In some places, such violence will fuel localised ethnic conflict, pulling at Sudan's already badly frayed social fabric.

And in areas under RSF control, there will be resistance. Mr Dagalo's paramilitary forces, known for terrorising civilians from armoured jeeps and motorbikes, are adept at mobile warfare. But they are widely loathed throughout Sudan, where they have no record of governing—and have routinely committed atrocities. Even if they conquer more territory, their rule will be precarious.

Talks to broker a ceasefire have made scant progress, and that seems unlikely to change in 2025. The SAF considers itself the legitimate government of Sudan and is reluctant to sit down with what it sees as a jumped-up militia. During 2024 the army won the support of Russia and received arms from Iran, strengthening the hand of those in its senior ranks who oppose a ceasefire. Those include Islamist hardliners from the party of Sudan's former dictator, Omar al-Bashir, who see war as an opportunity to return to power, as well as business elites who see it as an opportunity to get rich.

For its part, the RSF also sees little reason to make concessions. It has the backing of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which has continued to supply it with arms, including drones, despite widespread opprobrium. The UAE does so because it reckons, rightly, that it can get away with it.

Despite its horrifying human toll, and a high probability that the instability will soon spread beyond its borders, Sudan's civil war receives only a fraction of the international attention given to wars in the Middle East and Ukraine. Aid deliveries to mitigate what some experts predict will be the worst famine since China's Great Leap Forward are woefully inadequate. Over the next two years more than 10m people could perish—and far too little will be done to prevent it. ●

paper
when
23/1/25

**Sudan's civil war
will grow even
more brutal**



Middle East & Africa

Goelux
guit
21/1/25



Now what?

The outlook for the Middle East depends on three cantankerous old men

Gregg Carlstrom Middle East correspondent,
The Economist

WHEN THE Gaza war began in late 2023 even some Israeli generals thought it would be finished within two or three months. Few observers thought it would drag on for more than a year. Fewer still predicted the swift decapitation of Hizbullah, the Shia militia based in Lebanon, or the back-and-forth bombardment between Iran and Israel. During 2024, assumptions that had seemed to govern the region for decades collapsed within months.

War will continue to shape the Middle East in the coming year. Even the best-case scenario is a bleak

one: that the regional conflict grinds to a halt, but the destruction and displacement it caused remains a problem for many years. The fighting may not end, though. Instead it could expand and shatter a fragile detente in the Gulf. Which way the region goes will depend largely on three cantankerous old men: Ali Khamenei, Binyamin Netanyahu and Donald Trump.

The first two have been consistent. Mr Khamenei, the supreme leader of Iran, is nervous about direct conflict with Israel but also willing to risk it for the first time in Iran's history. The ballistic-missile barrage he approved in October is unlikely to be the last. As for Mr Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, he is determined to strike harder not just at Iran's proxies but at Iran itself. The wild card is Mr Trump.

Optimists hope that he will not want a war hanging over the start of his presidency. If pushed towards a ceasefire, Mr Netanyahu would be unlikely to defy Mr Trump. The prime minister cannot ignore him the way he did Joe Biden. But that will be cold comfort for Palestinians and Lebanese.

By some accounts more than 10% of Gaza's 2m people have already fled, often paying huge sums of money to reach Egypt. That exodus will continue in 2025. Those who remain in Gaza will spend much of the year huddled in tents and makeshift shelters. Reconstruction will be slow, if it begins at all. Mr Netanyahu will continue to dismiss talk of post-war arrangements in Gaza.

Mr Trump may be more attentive to Lebanon, if only because he now has a Lebanese son-in-law. But

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United States



The sequel is usually worse

booted out once. That was more than a century ago. Most presidents who return to office do so without unified party control of Congress. But Mr Trump has been graced with a trifecta, with Republican majorities in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. This

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Asia



the people, the people

ousting of Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh's prime minister, who had become increasingly autocratic. Both events seemed good omens for the struggle between democracy and autocracy in Asia. Is such optimism likely to spread in 2025?
Take India first. Asia's biggest democracy appears to be flourishing—up to a point. On the face of it, Mr Modi is acting as if little has changed since his hum-

2025



hamen
Mr Trump

though Mr Khatami has been in power three times as long as Iran's founder, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the ghost of the founding imam still haunts him. So he retorted that Mr Trump was "not worthy of any message exchanges".

His presidential vanity dented, Mr Trump withdrew from the JCPOA, enforced an oil embargo and had Iran's most senior general, Qassem Suleimani, assassinated. In response, Iran accelerated its nuclear programme to the point of becoming a

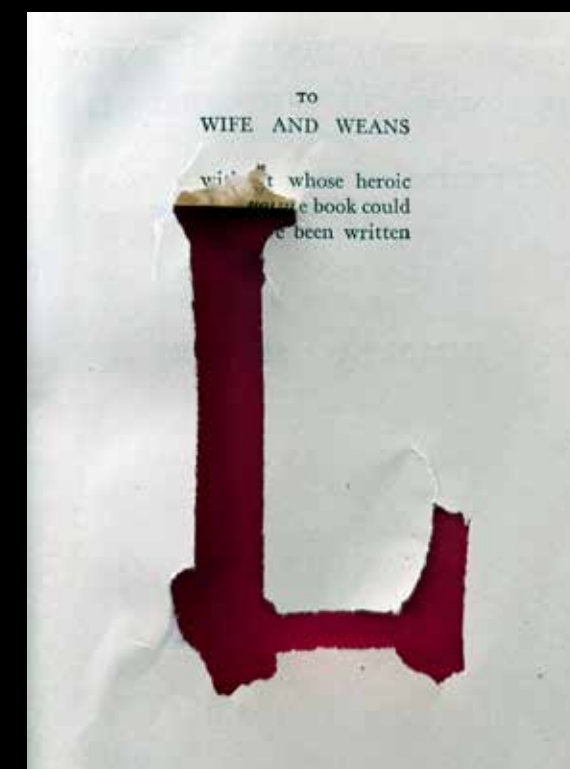
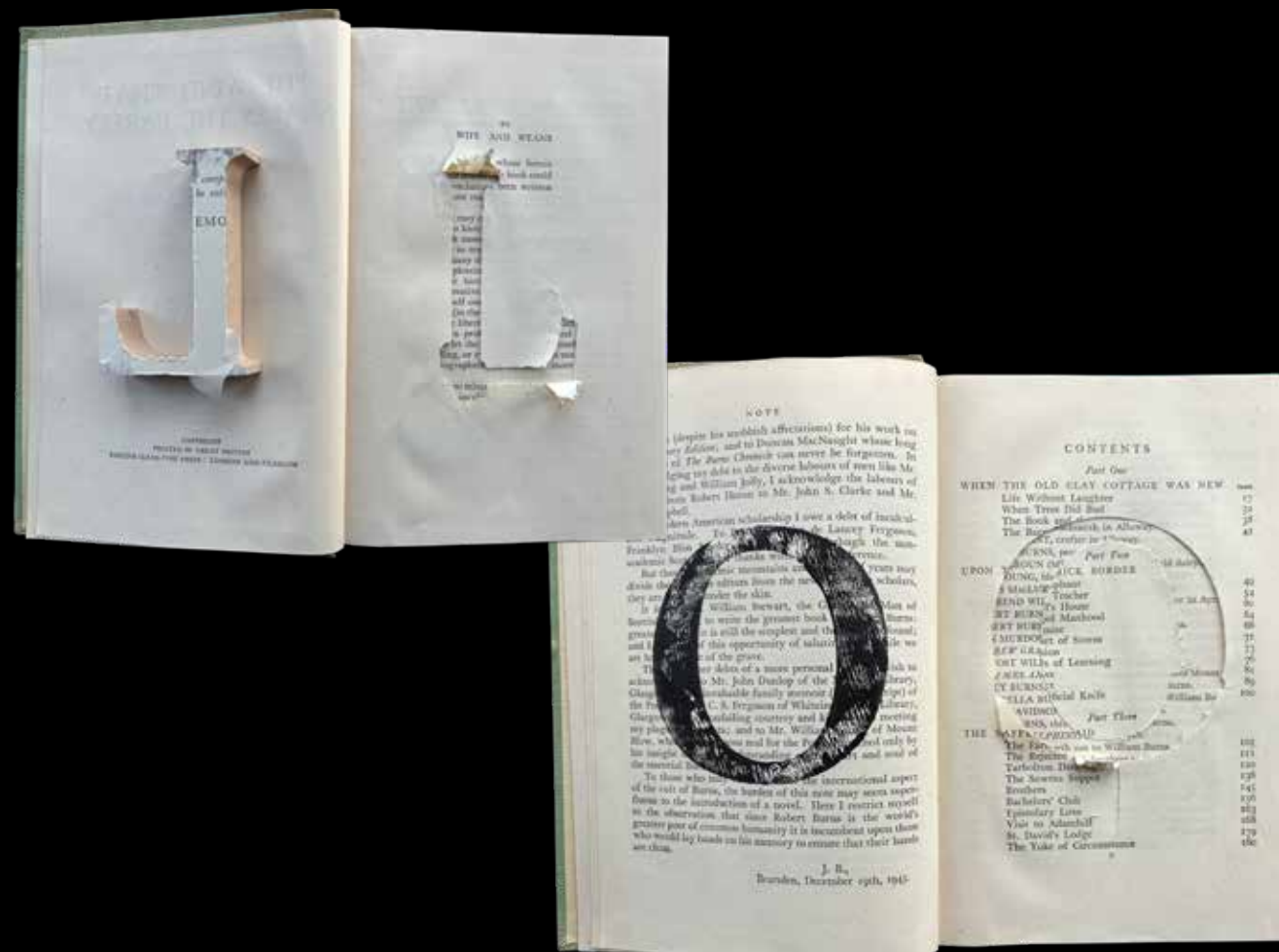
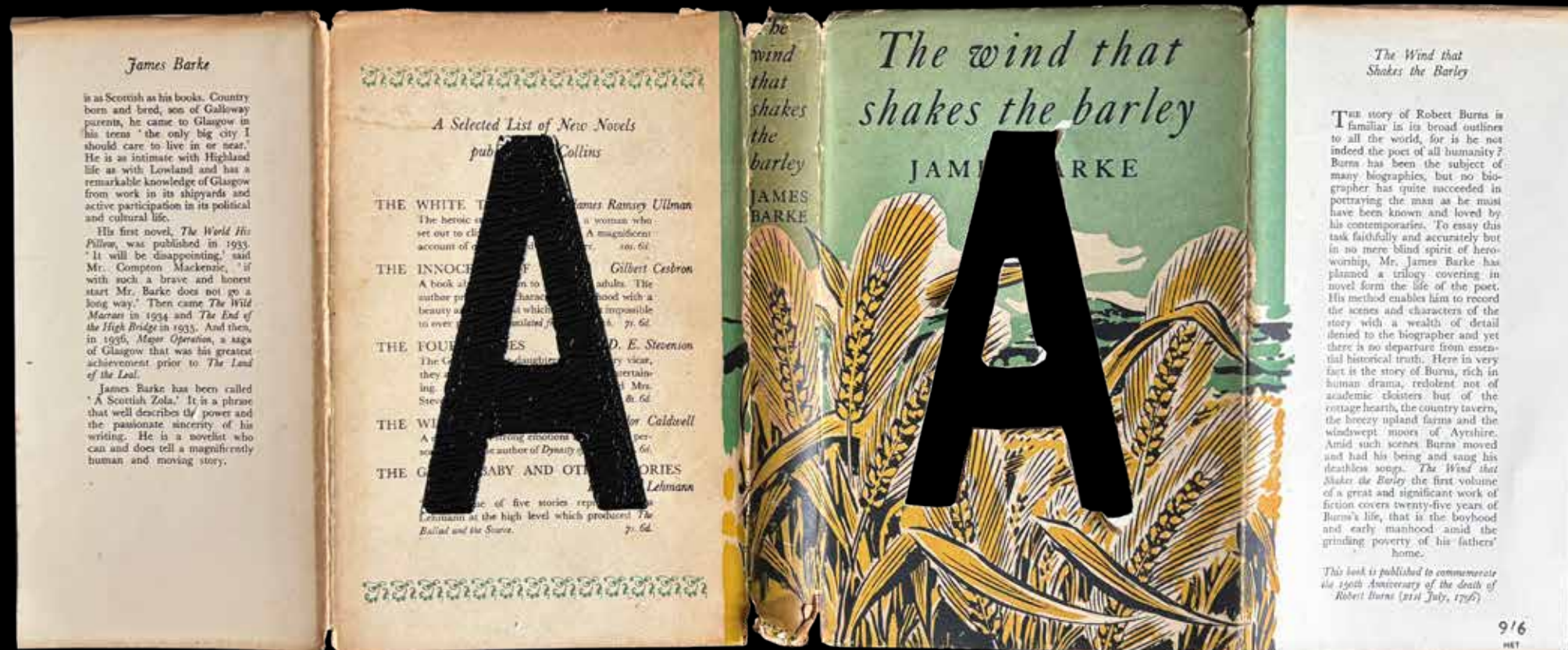
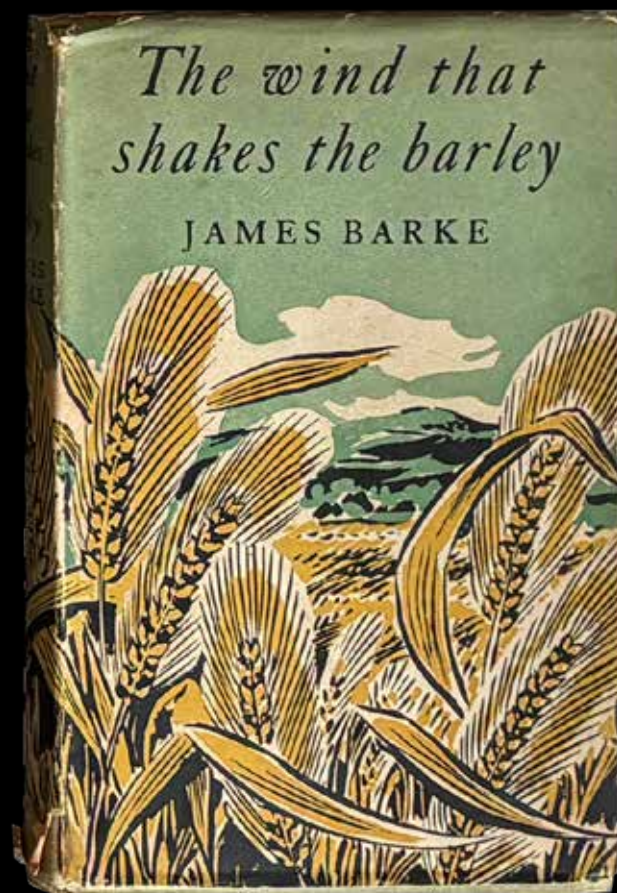


ats?

Trump's overhaul of the Republican party will complicate the Democrats' debate over whether the winning path nationally lies further left, or towards the centre. The pro-labour economic populism of the party's leftists may appeal to work-

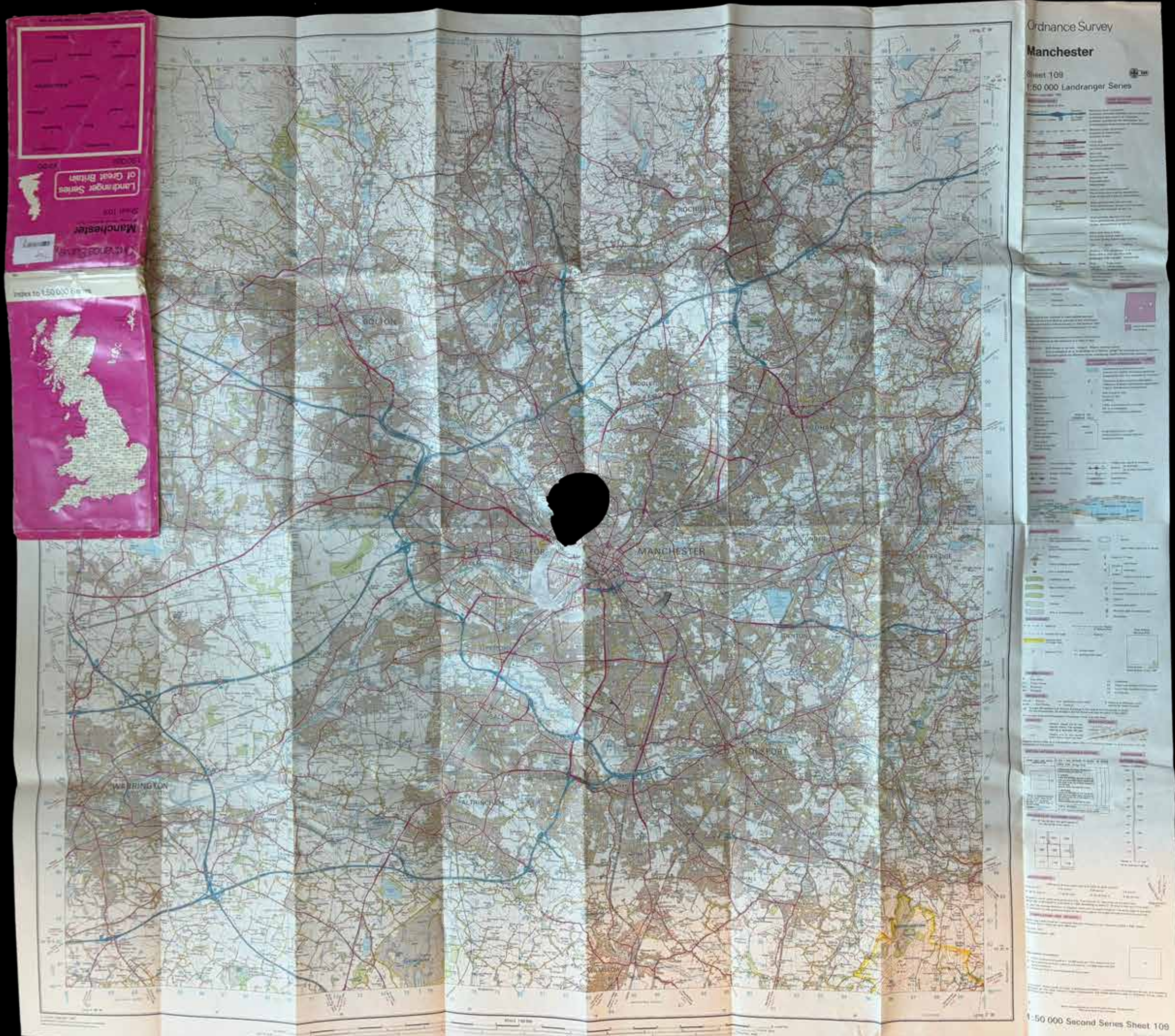
Trump takes America in the next four decades to come.









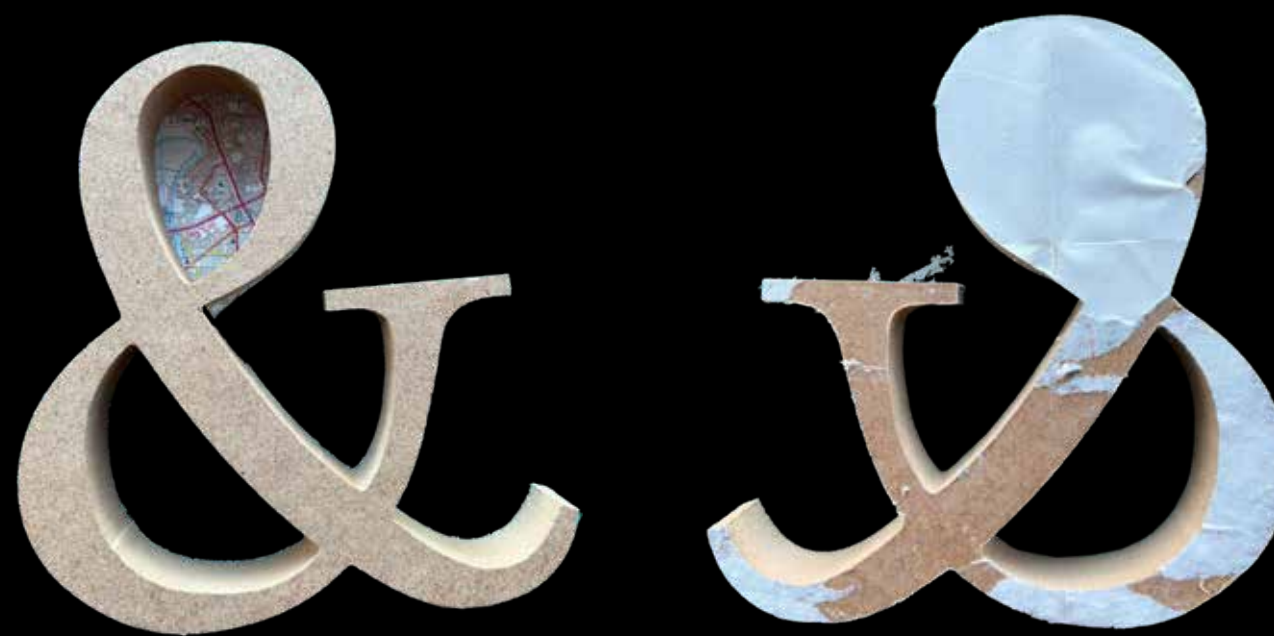


Ordnance Survey

Manchester

Sheet 109
1:50 000 Landranger Series

1:50 000 Second Series Sheet 109

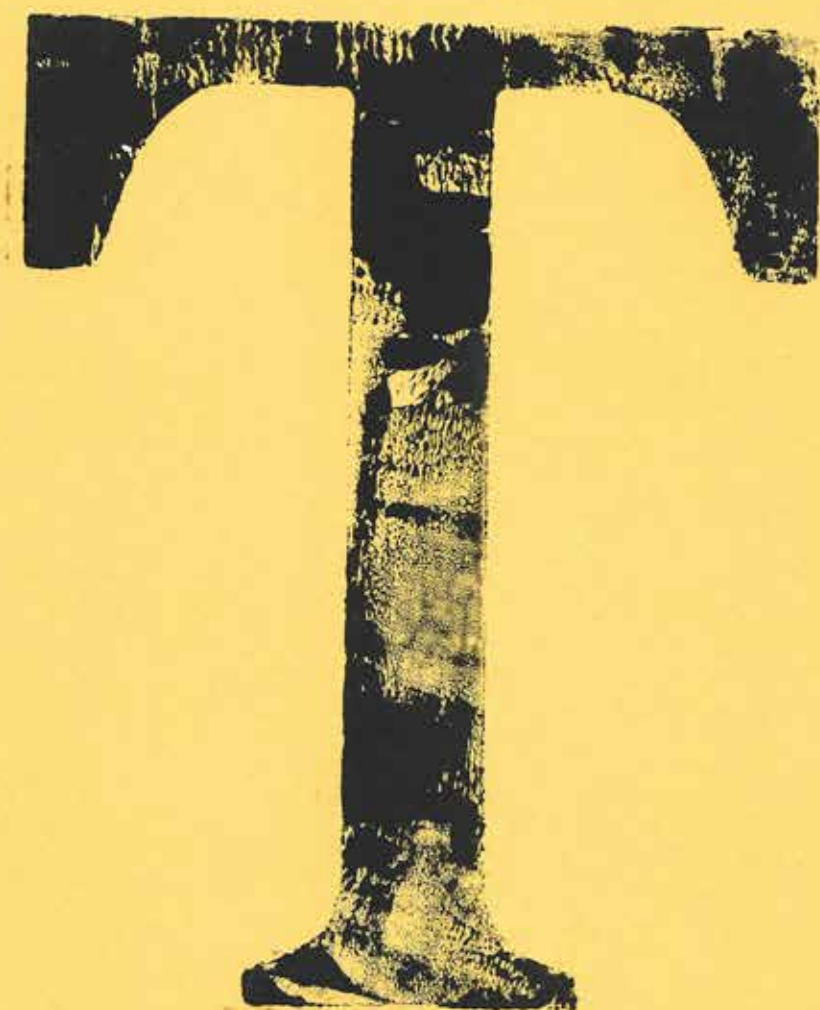


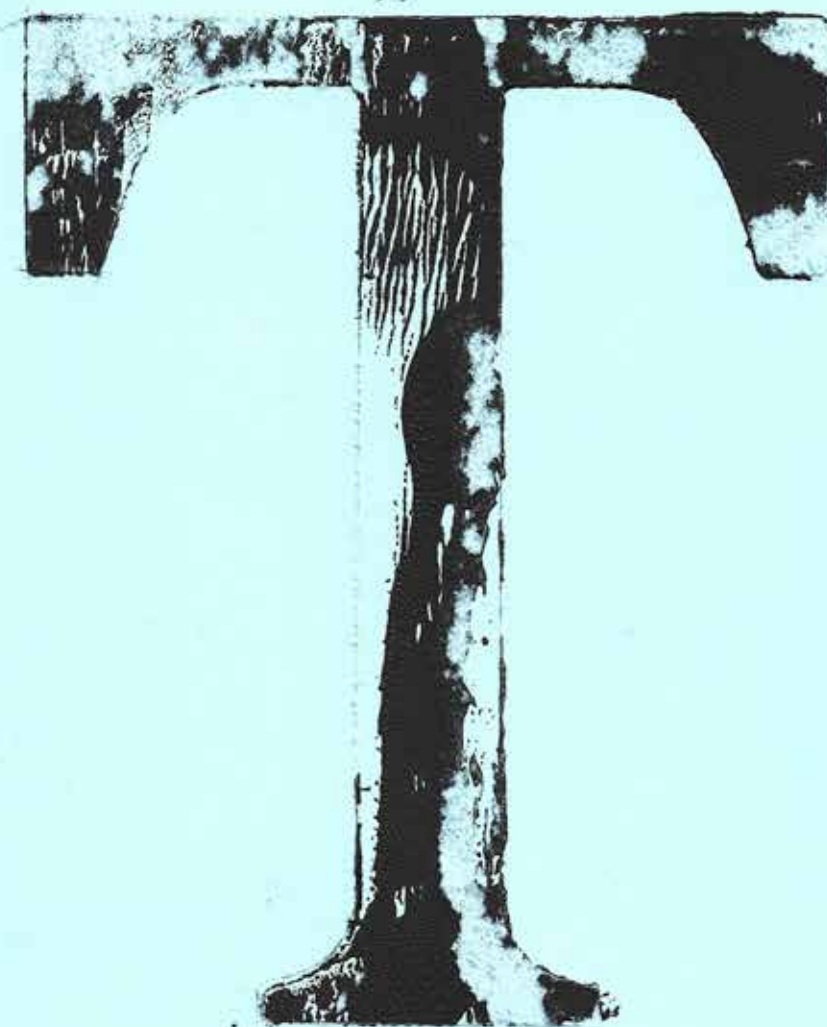
A lens to look through, can
this attempted method of
UNdocumenting, or removing
ink, serve to document in a new way?

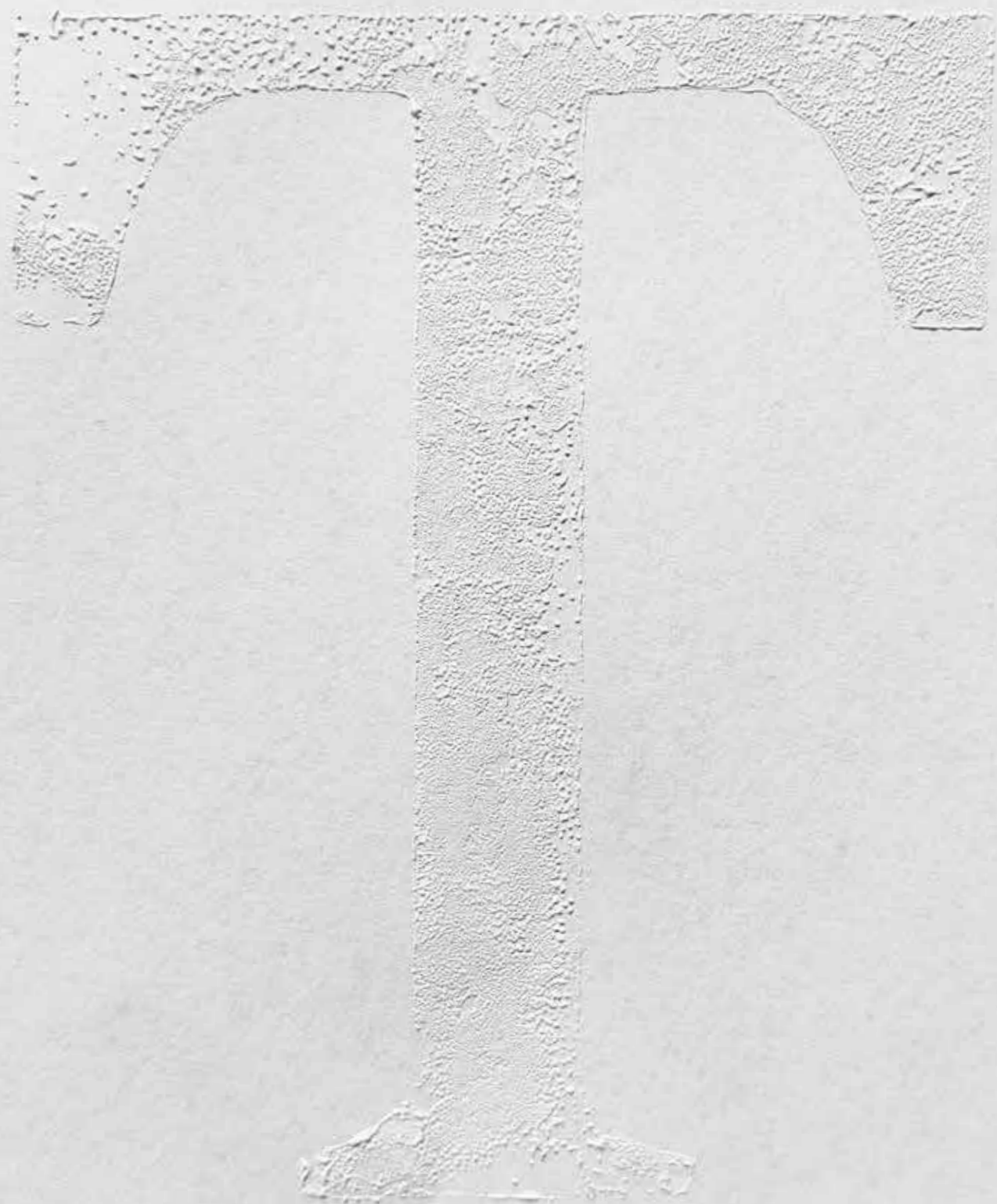


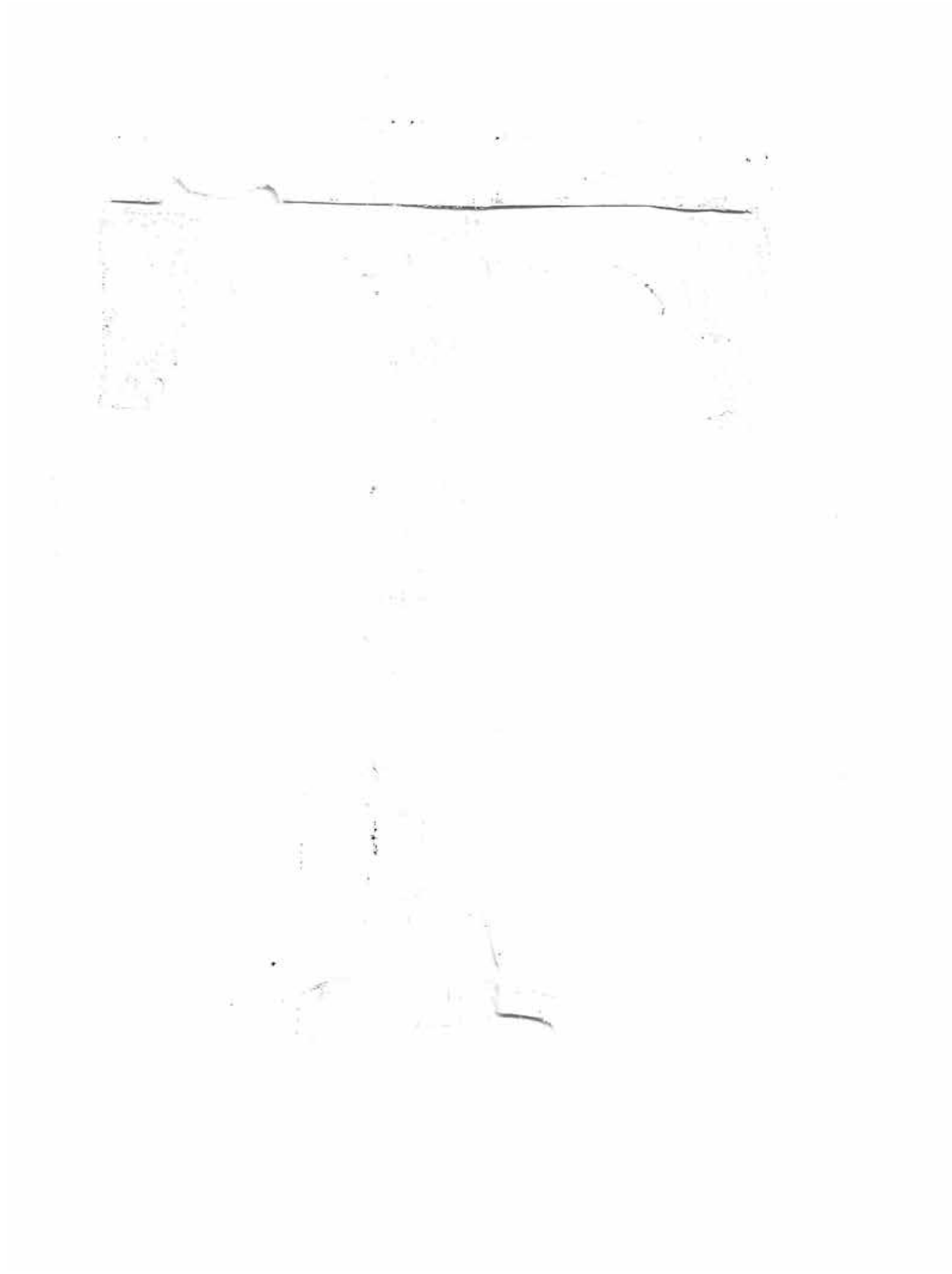


YES









Written response: draft 2

‘The negative space is a value to consider’ José García Oliva

Letterpress is a technique of relief printing where a hard raised letterform in wood or metal is inked and applied to a surface leaving an impression. At a basic level, letterpress imparts knowledge from a document.

To hack or subvert this linear process from movable character to paper, we need to consider its most basic meaning. In her analysis of documents, Lisa Gitelman suggests that the document exists in order to document and its occurrence on paper ‘bearing semiotic traces is not merely the most typical case, it is also the most salient, since the affordances of paper and the function that defines documents have become inextricable from one another’ and ‘documents are important not because they are ubiquitous . . . but rather because they are so evidently integral to the ways people think and live. The epistemic power of the know-show function is indisputable, and the properties of documents matter in all kinds of far-reaching ways.’ (Gitelman, 2014, p.4)

In my iterative experiment, I attempted to reverse the act of letterpress and therefore documenting, to take ink back from the page to see what was left behind.

By using a piece of moveable type and experimenting with various adhesives, I developed a homemade method for reversing letterpress. Instead of ink, double-sided sticky tape was applied to a type block. When pressed to printed matter with force and then removed, a hole was left behind. These were initially destructive and unrecognisable, then more reminiscent of letterforms when more care was taken in removal.

Various publications including a book, a map, wallpaper became an experiment. After they were complete, I realised that by reversing the print that was made, be that a hand stamped woodblock character or a page from a magazine, leaves a space that has *value*. Removing the printing became printmaking and the negative space became ink.

This anti-letterpress is indelible. If we either letterpress, or remove it, we are communicating, documenting, simply due to the fact a surface exists and that we manipulate it. In its earliest of definitions, ‘The Greek word *typos* generally means “trace” and ‘The Greek word *graphein* generally means “to dig.”’ (Flusser, 2011), bringing an archeologic element to its latin offspring, *typography*. The human invention of writing means there is an inescapable need for us to communicate.

‘The goose quill put an end to talk. It abolished mystery; it gave architecture and towns; it brought roads and armies, bureaucracy. It was the basic metaphor with which the cycle of civilization began, the step from the dark into the light of the mind. The hand that filled the parchment page built a city.’
(McLuhan and Fiore, [1967] 2001, p. 48).

Rather than stripping back this medium to an abstract, pre-alphabet, olfactory environment mentioned by McLuhan and Fiore, is there a way of using this anti-letterpress to see differently? Can it be used as a lens to see through?

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Flusser, V (2011). *Does Writing Have a Future?* Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2011.

McLuhan, M. and Fiore, F. [1967] 2001. *The Medium is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects*. Berkeley: Gingko Press