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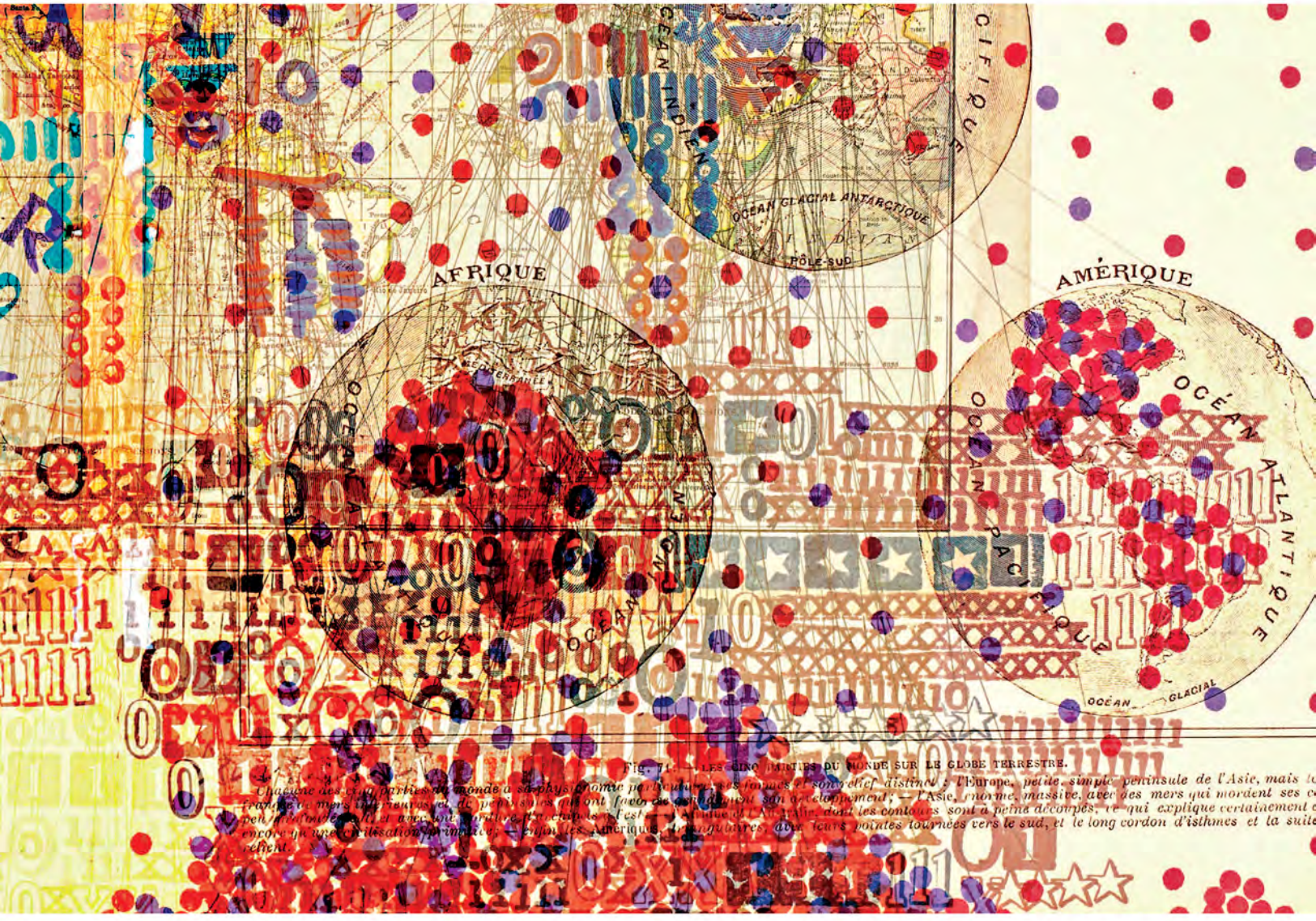

Mapping Current Wars and Conflicts

DAN MILLS | artist

Biographical Notes
Dan Mills is an artist. He used mixed media mappings, combining found maps to record not landscapes of geographical features and political boundaries, but of human movement. He began to incorporate maps into his work in the early 1990s, using them to reconfigure the world through erasure and overpainting.
Mills has exhibited widely, with solo shows in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and at academic museums and galleries throughout the United States. His work is in collections including the British Library, Harvard University, Library of Congress, John T. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and Wesleyan University.

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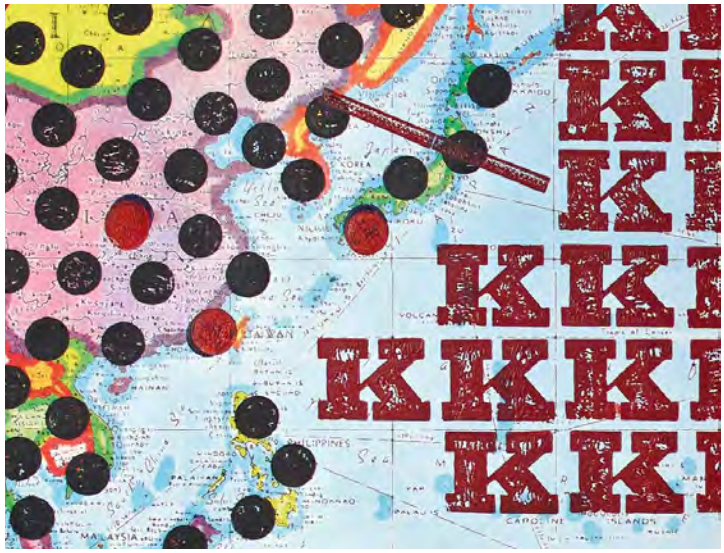


Current Wars and Conflicts…
(Belligerents and Supporters, Killed and A.I.R.S.)
2017, detail

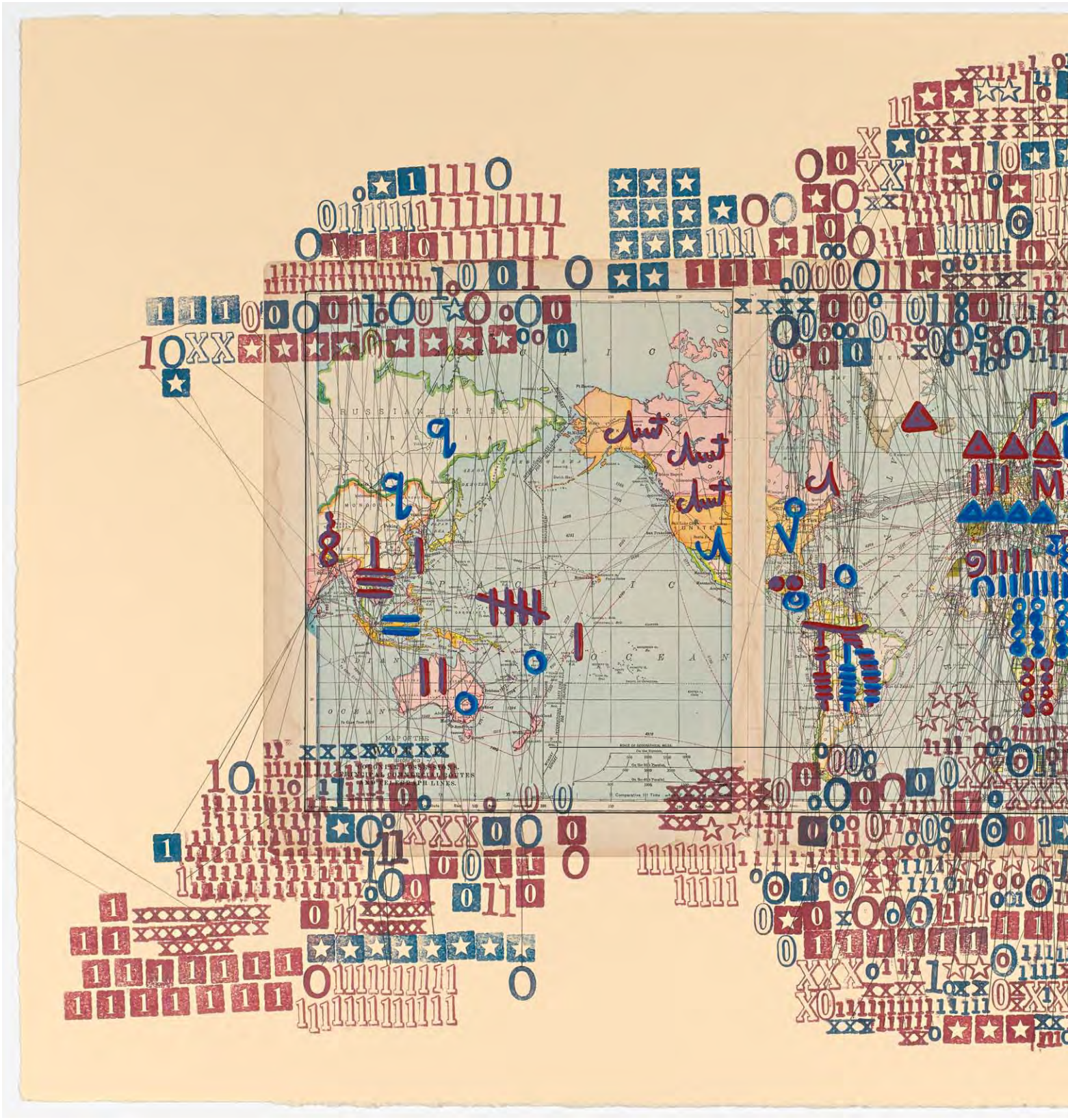
There is a lot of suffering and displacement due to armed conflicts in our world.

But how much? And how many current wars and conflicts are there across the globe?

The answers are the basis for a series of mixed media drawings. Smaller works are created on atlases and geography books.

They visualize current wars and conflicts through the affected populations: the numbers of belligerents and supporters, those killed and those that become asylum seekers, internally displaced, refugees, or simply stateless.

The final wall map compiles the data into a single work.


RUSSIAN EMPIRE
PACIFIC OCEAN
MAP OF THE

WARS AND CONFLICTS

In 2016, there were 59 ongoing wars and conflicts in the world. To be on my list, each had to have resulted in at least one death in the last year and at least 100 cumulative deaths.

The oldest is the Kashmir conflict, which began in 1947, after the partition of India and Pakistan.

The newest to make the list are the Kasaï-Central clashes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Cumulatively, how many belligerent groups (those directly involved in war) are there, and how many supporters (groups providing assistance to belligerents but not actively fighting)?

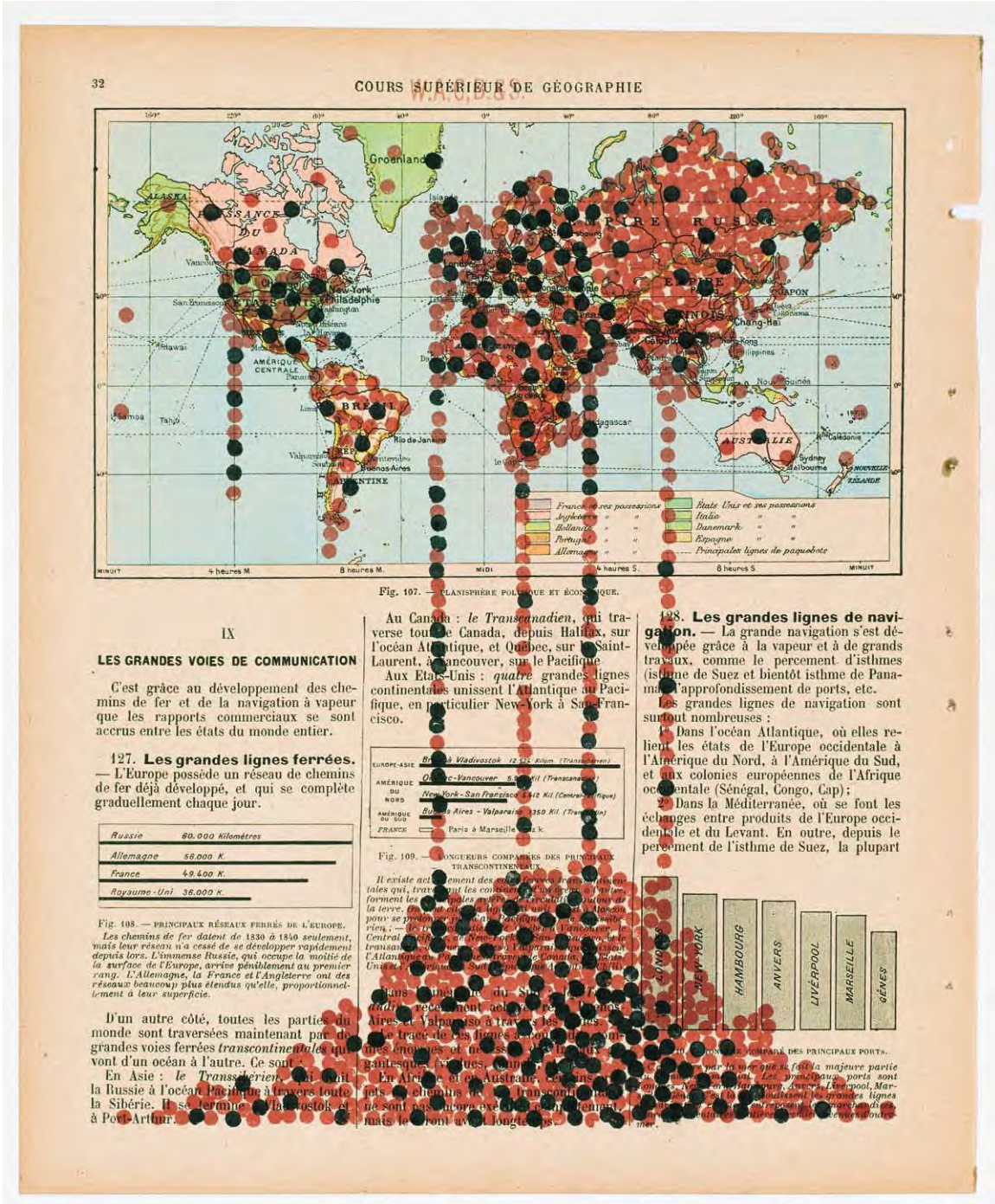
In 2015, there were 820 belligerent groups and 260 supporters of wars and conflicts.

Wars and Conflicts by Continent, with Ancient Symbols
2015, ink and graphite on printed map on paper, 56 x 76 cm

red 1, X and ☆ = belligerent group
blue 1, X and ☆ = supporting group
red 0 = no supporting group
blue 0 = no supporting group
(lines connect symbols to countries)

Current Wars and Conflicts by Continent, Belligerents and Supporters, Book 06
2017 ink, watercolour, and gouache on atlas, 27 x 39 x 2.5 cm

Red + = belligerent group
Black $ = supporting group, by continent



32 COURS SUPÉRIEUR DE GÉOGRAPHIE

Fig. 107. — PLANISPHÈRE POLITIQUE ET ÉCONOMIQUE.

IX

LES GRANDES VOIES DE COMMUNICATION

C'est grâce au développement des chemins de fer et de la navigation à vapeur que les rapports commerciaux se sont accrus entre les états du monde entier.

127. **Les grandes lignes ferrées.** — L'Europe possède un réseau de chemins de fer déjà développé, et qui se complète graduellement chaque jour.

Russie	60.000 Kilomètres
Allemagne	56.000 K.
France	49.400 K.
Royaume-Uni	36.000 K.

Fig. 108. — PRINCIPAUX RÉSEAUX FERRÉS DE L'EUROPE.

Les chemins de fer datent de 1830 à 1840 seulement, mais leur réseau n'a cessé de se développer rapidement depuis lors. L'immense Russie, qui occupe la moitié de la surface de l'Europe, arrive péniblement au premier rang. L'Allemagne, la France et l'Angleterre ont des réseaux beaucoup plus étendus qu'elle, proportionnellement à leur superficie.

D'un autre côté, toutes les parties du monde sont traversées maintenant par de grandes voies ferrées *transcontinentales* qui vont d'un océan à l'autre. Ce sont :

En Asie : *le Transsibérien*, qui unit la Russie à l'océan Pacifique à travers toute la Sibérie. Il se termine à Vladivostok et à Port-Arthur.

Au Canada : *le Transcanadien*, qui traverse tout le Canada, depuis Halifax, sur l'océan Atlantique, et Québec, sur le Saint-Laurent, à Vancouver, sur le Pacifique.

Aux Etats-Unis : *quatre* grandes lignes continentales unissent l'Atlantique au Pacifique, en particulier New-York à San-Francisco.

EUROPE-ASIE	Brest à Vladivostok 12 572 Kilom. (Transsibérien)
AMÉRIQUE DU NORD	Québec-Vancouver 5.9[illegible] Kil. (Transcanadien)
	New-York-San Francisco 5.412 Kil. (Central-Pacifique)
AMÉRIQUE DU SUD	Buenos Aires - Valparaiso 1350 Kil. (Transandin)
FRANCE	Paris à Marseille [illegible] k.

Fig. 109. — LONGUEURS COMPARÉES DES PRINCIPAUX TRANSCONTINENTAUX.

Il existe actuellement des voies ferrées transcontinentales qui, traversant les continents d'un océan à l'autre, forment les [illegible] autour de la terre. On [illegible] pour se prolonger [illegible] rien ; — le [illegible] Central [illegible] transan[illegible] l'Atlantique au Pacifique [illegible] Canada, [illegible] Unis et [illegible] Sud [illegible]

Sans [illegible] du Sud [illegible] *andin* récemment achevé [illegible] Aires et Valparaiso à travers les [illegible]

Le tracé de ces lignes [illegible] mes énormes et ne [illegible] gantesques (viaducs, [illegible]

En Afrique et en Australie, [illegible] jets [illegible] chemins de [illegible] transcontinentaux ne sont pas encore exécutés [illegible] mais le [illegible] ont avant longtemps.

128. **Les grandes lignes de navigation.** — La grande navigation s'est développée grâce à la vapeur et à de grands travaux, comme le percement d'isthmes (isthme de Suez et bientôt isthme de Panama), l'approfondissement de ports, etc.

Les grandes lignes de navigation sont surtout nombreuses :

1° Dans l'océan Atlantique, où elles relient les états de l'Europe occidentale à l'Amérique du Nord, à l'Amérique du Sud, et aux colonies européennes de l'Afrique occidentale (Sénégal, Congo, Cap) ;

2° Dans la Méditerranée, où se font les échanges entre produits de l'Europe occidentale et du Levant. En outre, depuis le percement de l'isthme de Suez, la plupart

LONDRES NEW-YORK HAMBOURG ANVERS LIVÉRPOOL MARSEILLE GÊNES

[illegible] COMPARÉ DES PRINCIPAUX PORTS.

[illegible] par la mer que se fait la majeure partie [illegible] Les principaux ports sont [illegible] Anvers, Liverpool, Marseille, Gênes [illegible] les grandes lignes [illegible] mer.

Piling Up
(Current Wars and Conflicts, Belligerents and Supporters)
2016, ink on book page on paper, 38 x 30 cm

Red dot = belligerent group
Black dot = supporting group, by continent

Current Wars and Conflicts by Continent, Belligerents and Supporters, Book 08
2017, ink, watercolour, and lacquer on atlas, 69 x 36 x 6 cm

Gold dot = belligerent group
Pink/silver dot = supporting group, by continent

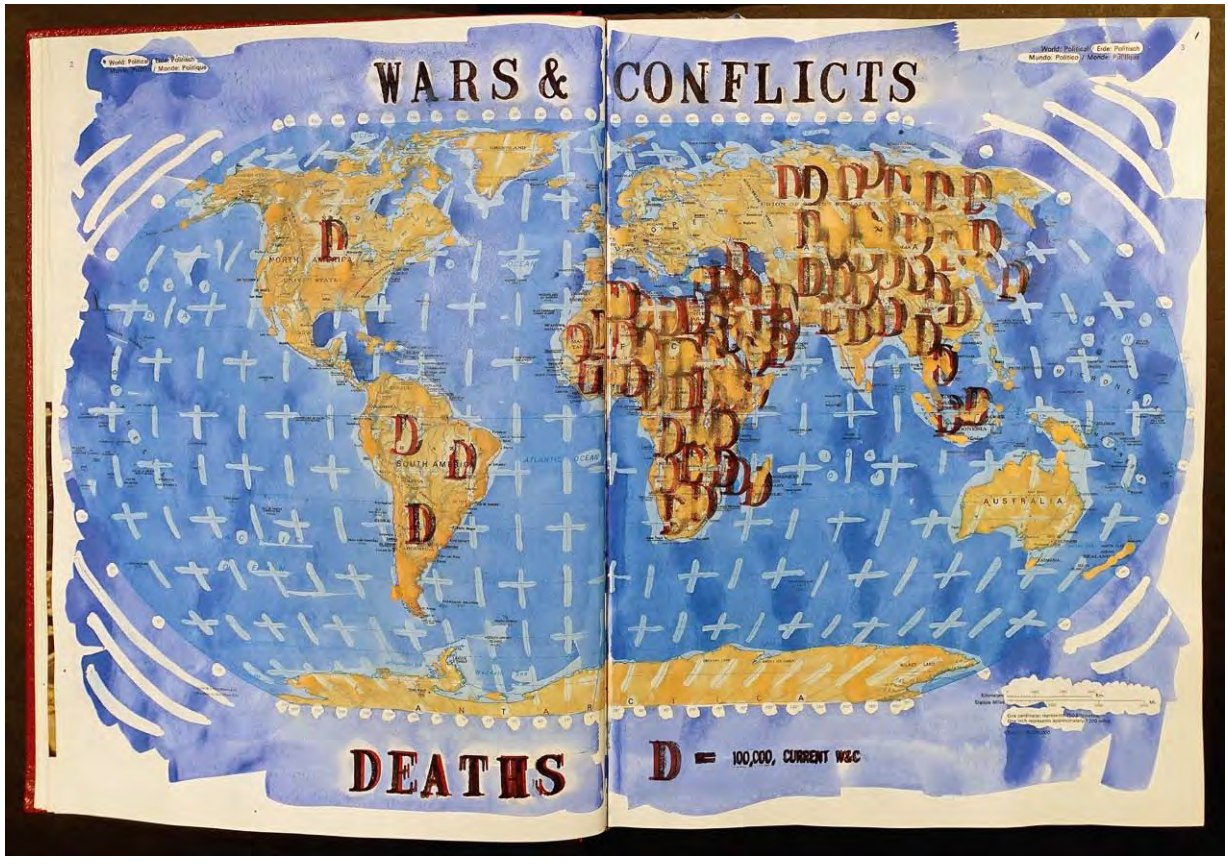
DEATHS FROM CONFLICTS

Of the 59 global conflicts in 2016:
Fourteen had fewer than 100 deaths last year, yet are responsible for an estimated 727,000+ cumulative deaths. Thirty had between 100 – 999 deaths, and are responsible for an estimated 2,418,000+ cumulative deaths.
Eleven had between 1,000 – 9,999 deaths, and are responsible for an estimated cumulative 890,000+ deaths. Four had more than 10,000 deaths and are responsible for an estimated 2,680,000+ cumulative deaths.

How many total deaths are the direct result of conflicts in 2016?
More than 156,000.

This number may seem misleadingly low. However, the cumulative estimated number of all deaths arising from current wars and conflicts range from 6,715,000 – 7,800,000 or more.

Current Wars and Conflicts, Killed by Continent, Book 02
2017, ink, watercolour, and gouache on atlas, 39 x 57 x 5 cm D = 100,000 deaths, by continent



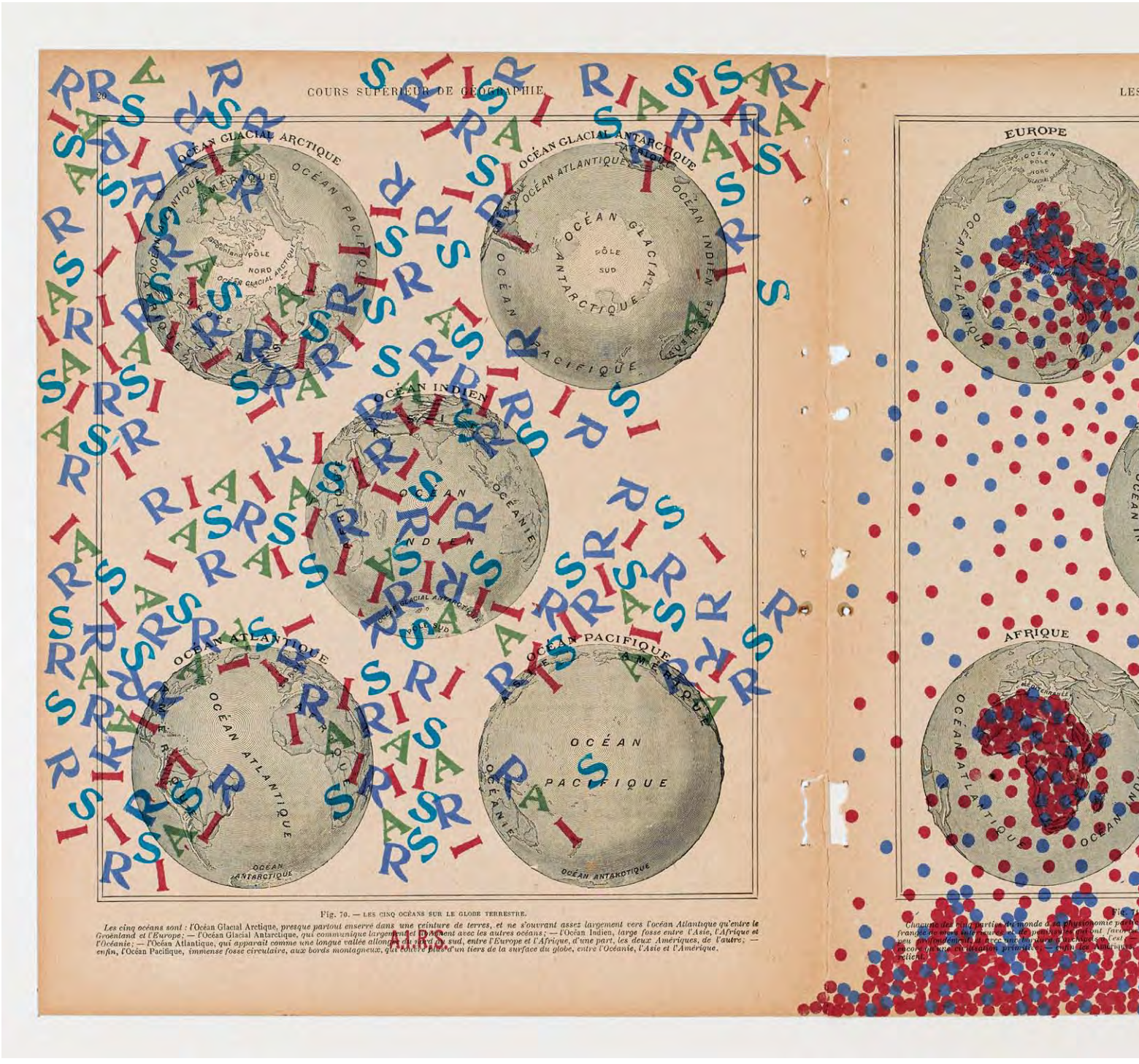
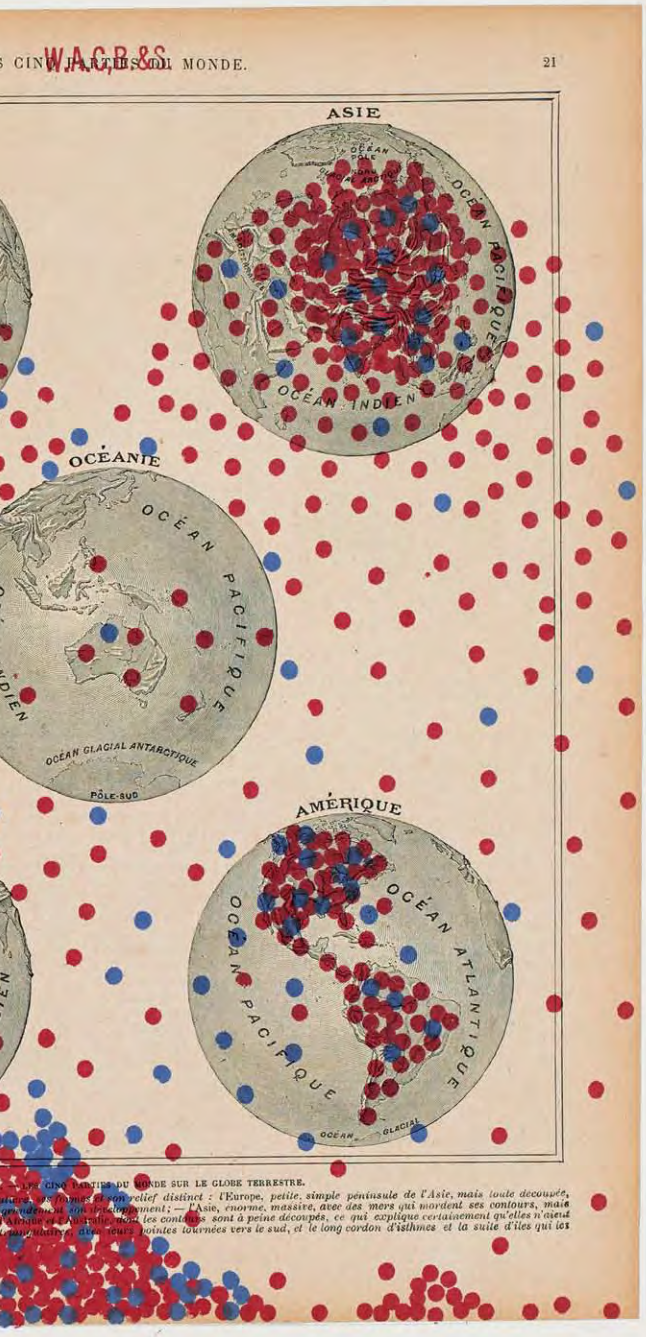


Fig. 70. — LES CINQ OCÉANS SUR LE GLOBE TERRESTRE.

Les cinq océans sont : l'Océan Glacial Arctique, *presque partout enserré dans une ceinture de terres, et ne s'ouvrant assez largement vers l'océan Atlantique qu'entre le Groënland et l'Europe;* — l'Océan Glacial Antarctique, *qui communique largement et [illegible] avec les autres océans;* — l'Océan Indien, *large fosse entre l'Asie, l'Afrique et l'Océanie;* — l'Océan Atlantique, *qui apparaît comme une longue vallée allongée du nord au sud, entre l'Europe et l'Afrique, d'une part, les deux Amériques, de l'autre;* — *enfin,* l'Océan Pacifique, *immense fosse circulaire, aux bords montagneux, qui couvre plus d'un tiers de la surface du globe, entre l'Océanie, l'Asie et l'Amérique.*



A.I.R.S. & Wars and Conflicts
(Asylum Seekers, IDP, Refugees, Stateless)
2016, ink on printed maps on paper, 57 x 76 cm

DISPLACEMENT

In addition to death, what are the effects of these ongoing wars and conflicts on populations?

Many people have become refugees, internally displaced, asylum seekers, or stateless.

How many? It is difficult to find accurate numbers for this. These are the most vulnerable, fragile, and transient populations on the planet. They are in a continuous state of flux, sometimes moving geographically, or crossing political borders, or shifting between different categories of human displacement.

Even organizations such as the United Nations Migration Agency, UN Refugee Agency, and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center—the organizations most likely to know—have conflicting information, sometimes differing by millions.

Some estimates for 2015:
Internally displaced people: over 41,000,000.
Refugees/persons of concern and asylum seekers in other countries: over 49,800,000.
Stateless people: over 5,000,000.

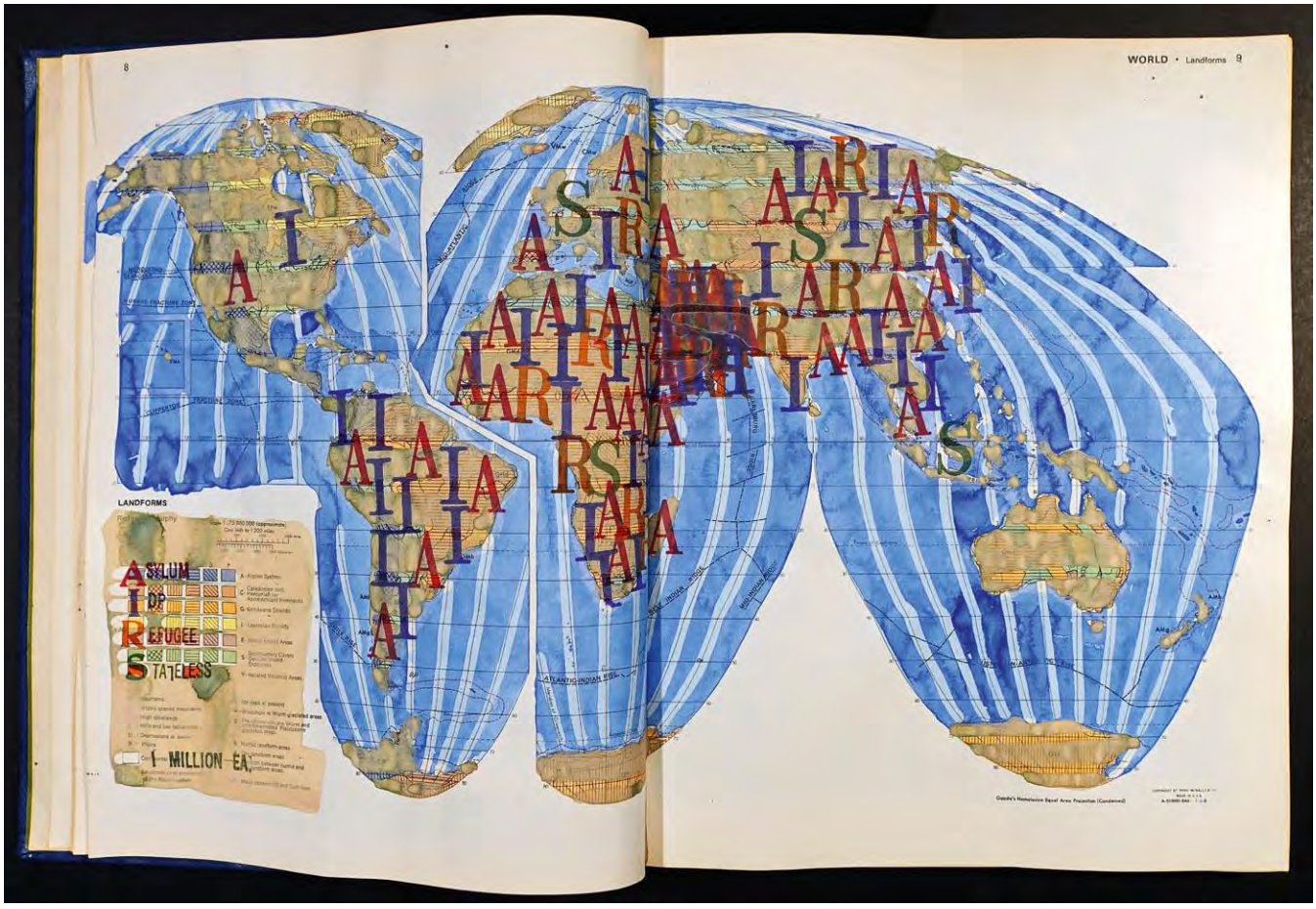
How do these figures compare with years past? Let's look at the category 'Internally Displaced People' (IDP).

In 2013, there were 27,000,000 IDP. This increased to 38,000,000 in 2014, and 41,000,000 in 2015.
2016 was more turbulent than 2015.

IDP have doubled in the last ten years.
More than 32,000,000 are children.

Not all IDP are from wars and conflicts: 19,000,000 are displaced due to natural disasters (although fragile populations in areas with ongoing conflicts are often part of this figure).

A.I.R.S. = 100,000 Asylum Seekers, Internally Displaced, Refugees, and Stateless by continent
Red dot = belligerent group
Violet dot = supporting group, by continent



A.I.R.S. by Continent
(Asylum Seekers, IDP, Refugees, Stateless) Book 17
2017, ink, watercolour, gouache on atlas, 20 x 28 x 4.5 cm

A.I.R.S. = 1,000,000 Asylum Seekers, IDP, Refugees, Stateless

The total number of people displaced by wars and conflicts rose from 37,500,000 in 2004 to 59,500,000 in 2014.

One in 113 people worldwide is displaced from their homes.

These numbers are staggering.
We live in a time when such populations been increasing for years, to numbers not seen since World War II. Due to political upheaval here and abroad, we are entering an era in which these numbers of displacement could continue to increase exponentially.

Wars and Conflicts, World Reference Atlas
2017, mixed media on map laid down on board,
102 x 59 x 3.2 cm

Orange, red, purple dots = belligerents
Green dots = supporters
K = 100,000 killed, by continent
Grey star = belligerent
Gold star = supporter
Red 0 = no belligerents
Blue 0 = no supporter
Red star = involved in wars

C W & C
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U.S. ARMY IN WORLD WAR

Current Wars and Conflicts… (Belligerents and Supporters, Killed and A.I.R.S.)
2017, ink on digitally reworked map, 241 x 379 cm

Black dot = belligerent group
Red dot = supporting group
K = 1,000,000 killed
A.I.R.S. = 1,000,000 Asylum Seekers, Internally Displaced, Refugees, Stateless

SOURCES

Eurostat
Foreignpolicy.com
Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion
Internaldisplacement.org
Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Norwegian Refugee Council
Refworld
UN Data
United Nations Migration Agency
UNHCR, The United Nations Refugee Agency
The World Factbook – CIA

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