

## omission /əʊ'mɪʃ.ən/

the act of not including somebody/something or not doing something; the fact of not including something

that should have been included  
— Oxford Learner's and Cambridge  
Dictionaries

Throughout the history of humanity, we are constantly recording, documenting, remembering. We catalog on cave walls, on wax tablets and wooden boards, on animal skins, on paper, and now, on electronic devices. Everything that we know and remember today is such because it was made to exist. But how about what wasn't?



# Omission

## Inspiration

In this issue, we are re-remembering what was left out: the lost, the overlooked, the forgotten. Our understanding is shaped as much by what is neglected as by what is preserved, and we are in search of these empty spaces left behind—by accident or by design. We invite contributions exploring all facets of 'omission'. How do societies decide what deserves to be recorded? What was left out that perhaps should have been preserved, and what did we forget—or choose to forget?

Through gaps and absences, books and texts tell stories of omission, allowing us to find something in the nothing, revealing, like a time capsule, what has and has not survived the centuries. In medieval manuscripts, we find traces of erased mistakes, or the last blank pages transformed for a new purpose, where absence becomes the ground for something new. In the digital age, we face a new paradox where infinite duplication promises to defeat forgetfulness and allow endless backups, and yet we still decide what not to preserve, what not to share, what to delete.

Beyond the written page, omission continues to reflect how societies decide what stays and what goes. Historically, omission has served as an instrument of control and suppression through bans, burnings, censorship, restrictions of access, and destruction of knowledge. Yet omission can also resist. By not saying, not writing, not preserving, or not showing, the enactment of protest is realized through silence, refusal, or incompleteness. Culturally, from the avoided number 13 on Irish licence plates to absent fourth floors in Chinese buildings, these manifestations of human superstition demonstrate that absence, too, is a form of presence, a mark of what a society collectively fears or values.

