

Ars Memoriae

Αναστασία Καραγιώργη

TX2013042

Let me tell you a story about other stories.



ΑΛΗΜΟΥ ΕΧΟΝΕΙΟ
ΑΝΑΗΤΕΣ

↑
ΘΕΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΟΥΡΤΙΑΝΗΣ

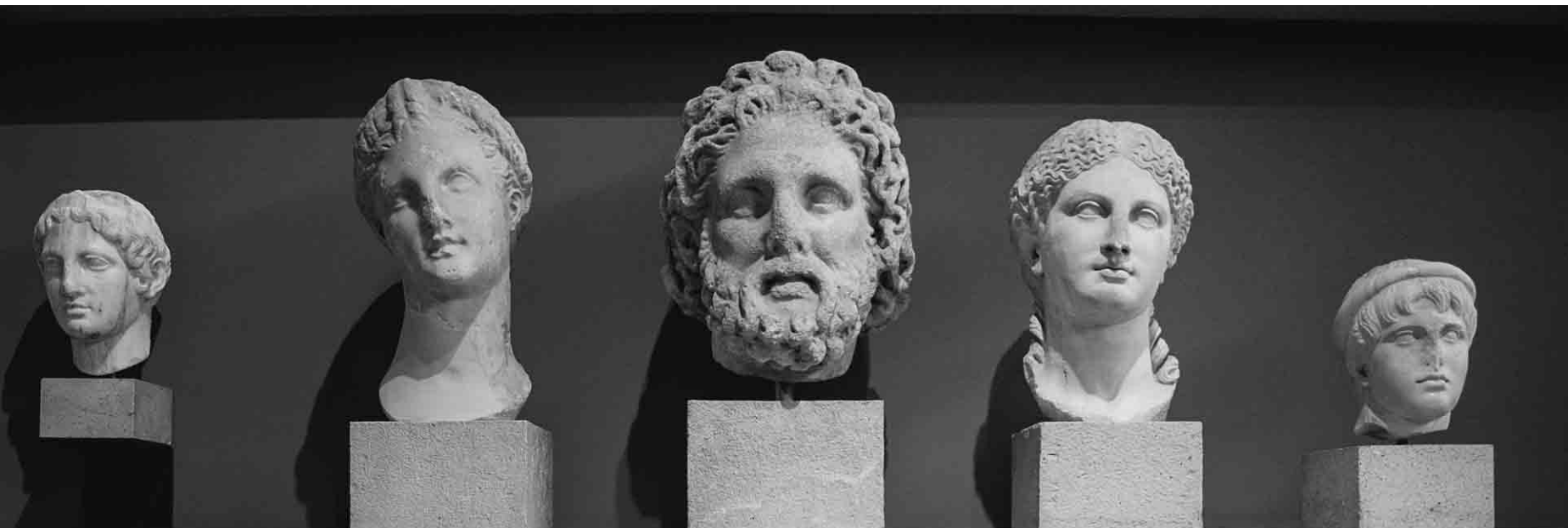
About the stories we tell ourselves, and how by telling them they become real. Our world is made of stories, we are made of stories, and yet we hardly notice them. They seem transparent.



What differentiates us from other animals is that our language is creative and not merely descriptive. Our communication has the role of assigning meaning to the world. We create things by agreeing they exist.

ΕΤΟΥΣ ΤΟΥ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΤΥΡΑΒΤ
ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΙ ΤΙΒΕΡΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ
ΚΑΙΣΑΡΙΣ ΕΒΑΣ ΣΤΟ ΓΕΡΜΑΝΙΚΟ
ΑΡΧΙΕΡΙΑ ΜΑΡΧΙΚΗΣ ΕΞΟΥΣΙΑΣ
ΤΟΤΕ ΤΑΡΤΟΝ ΥΠΑΤΟ ΑΠΟ ΔΕ ΔΙΓΜΕΝ
ΤΟΤΕ ΤΑΡΤΟΝ ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΙ ΤΟ ΟΓΔΟΝ
ΠΑΤΡΙ ΠΑΤΡΙΔΟΣ Η ΠΟΛΙΣ ΠΟΛΙΤΑΝ
ΧΟΥΝΤΩΝ
ΛΕΙΚΗΡΑΤΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΔΑ
ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ
ΕΠΙΜΕΛΗΤΟΥ ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ ΤΟΥ
ΠΕΛΗΓΕΙΝΟΥ

We might know some facts, but facts alone are not enough to our minds.
We like to find (or create?) relationships between facts, to jump into conclusions.



Κεφάλι νεαρού άνδρα, πιθανώς Απόλλωνα
Αγνώστη provenance
3ος αι. π.Χ.

Head of a young man, possibly Apollo
Unknown provenance
3rd c. B.C.

Κεφάλι νεαρής γυναίκας, ίσως θεάς
Αγνώστη provenance
4ος αι. π.Χ.

Head of a young woman, possibly a goddess
Unknown provenance
4th c. B.C.

Κεφάλι ενός γενειοφόρου θεού, ίσως του Ποσειδώνα ή του Δία
Αγνώστη provenance
3ος αι. π.Χ.

Head of a bearded god, possibly Poseidon or Sarapis
Unknown provenance
3rd c. B.C.

Γυναικείο κεφάλι
Αρχαίο-ισλαμικό στυλ
[3ος-4ος αι. π.Χ.]
[4ος-5ος αι. π.Χ.]
[5ος-6ος αι. π.Χ.]
[7ος-8ος αι. π.Χ.]
[9ος-10ος αι. π.Χ.]
[11ος-12ος αι. π.Χ.]
[13ος-14ος αι. π.Χ.]
[15ος-16ος αι. π.Χ.]
[17ος-18ος αι. π.Χ.]
[19ος-20ος αι. π.Χ.]
[21ος-22ος αι. π.Χ.]
[23ος-24ος αι. π.Χ.]
[25ος-26ος αι. π.Χ.]
[27ος-28ος αι. π.Χ.]
[29ος-30ος αι. π.Χ.]
[31ος-32ος αι. π.Χ.]
[33ος-34ος αι. π.Χ.]
[35ος-36ος αι. π.Χ.]
[37ος-38ος αι. π.Χ.]
[39ος-40ος αι. π.Χ.]
[41ος-42ος αι. π.Χ.]
[43ος-44ος αι. π.Χ.]
[45ος-46ος αι. π.Χ.]
[47ος-48ος αι. π.Χ.]
[49ος-50ος αι. π.Χ.]
[51ος-52ος αι. π.Χ.]
[53ος-54ος αι. π.Χ.]
[55ος-56ος αι. π.Χ.]
[57ος-58ος αι. π.Χ.]
[59ος-60ος αι. π.Χ.]
[61ος-62ος αι. π.Χ.]
[63ος-64ος αι. π.Χ.]
[65ος-66ος αι. π.Χ.]
[67ος-68ος αι. π.Χ.]
[69ος-70ος αι. π.Χ.]
[71ος-72ος αι. π.Χ.]
[73ος-74ος αι. π.Χ.]
[75ος-76ος αι. π.Χ.]
[77ος-78ος αι. π.Χ.]
[79ος-80ος αι. π.Χ.]
[81ος-82ος αι. π.Χ.]
[83ος-84ος αι. π.Χ.]
[85ος-86ος αι. π.Χ.]
[87ος-88ος αι. π.Χ.]
[89ος-90ος αι. π.Χ.]
[91ος-92ος αι. π.Χ.]
[93ος-94ος αι. π.Χ.]
[95ος-96ος αι. π.Χ.]
[97ος-98ος αι. π.Χ.]
[99ος-100ος αι. π.Χ.]

Head of a woman
It may originally have represented the goddess Demeter
[late 3rd-early 1st c. B.C.]
Later (after 42 A.D.) it was converted to portray Livia, Augustus' wife
Theodosius

Κεφάλι νέου με διάδημα
[1ος-2ος αι. π.Χ.]
[3ος-4ος αι. π.Χ.]
[5ος-6ος αι. π.Χ.]
[7ος-8ος αι. π.Χ.]
[9ος-10ος αι. π.Χ.]
[11ος-12ος αι. π.Χ.]
[13ος-14ος αι. π.Χ.]
[15ος-16ος αι. π.Χ.]
[17ος-18ος αι. π.Χ.]
[19ος-20ος αι. π.Χ.]
[21ος-22ος αι. π.Χ.]
[23ος-24ος αι. π.Χ.]
[25ος-26ος αι. π.Χ.]
[27ος-28ος αι. π.Χ.]
[29ος-30ος αι. π.Χ.]
[31ος-32ος αι. π.Χ.]
[33ος-34ος αι. π.Χ.]
[35ος-36ος αι. π.Χ.]
[37ος-38ος αι. π.Χ.]
[39ος-40ος αι. π.Χ.]
[41ος-42ος αι. π.Χ.]
[43ος-44ος αι. π.Χ.]
[45ος-46ος αι. π.Χ.]
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[59ος-60ος αι. π.Χ.]
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[69ος-70ος αι. π.Χ.]
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[89ος-90ος αι. π.Χ.]
[91ος-92ος αι. π.Χ.]
[93ος-94ος αι. π.Χ.]
[95ος-96ος αι. π.Χ.]
[97ος-98ος αι. π.Χ.]
[99ος-100ος αι. π.Χ.]

Head of a young man wearing a diadem
Possibly represents an adolescent hero
Theodosius
125-150 A.D.



So many things are made up. Ideologies, identities, histories. Around every core of truth there are virtually infinite layers of meaning that we have weaved.







Different narratives come to form one huge network of meaning. People tell stories about themselves, societies tell stories about their past and the things that hold them together. Personal and collective stories constantly interact, altering one another.



Our memory is based upon narrations of the past which explain our present, and build expectations for the future. The past, as we perceive it, is not fixed. It is made out of stories about what happened that we tell over and over again. And what actually happened, though still important, lacks weight.



What drives us forward is our idea of the past, making no difference whether this is objective or not. And narrations change as our lives unfold. An event from childhood is seen differently when remembered in adulthood.



Yet we strive for permanence in this ever-changing world, so we create things to keep our memories for us.



ΣΟΥΜΕΛΑ ΠΙΠΕΡΙΔΟΥ
ΕΤΩΝ 75
+ 9-1-52

A photograph that holds the image of a dear person,











a few words on a gravestone to describe a life,



ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΣ Ι.
ΣΤΕΦΑΝΙΔΗΣ
ΑΠ. 6.12.79. ΕΤ. 91. 05

ΧΡΗΣΤΟΣ
ΑΠ. 12.
ΙΩΑΝΝΑ
ΑΠ. 7.

ΣΤΡΟΣΚΙΔΟΥ ΣΤΑ
ΑΠ. 27-8. 1979





monuments of people or events considered to be important,









heirlooms passed down from our ancestors,



Constantinople. Tour de Léandre.

85
MB

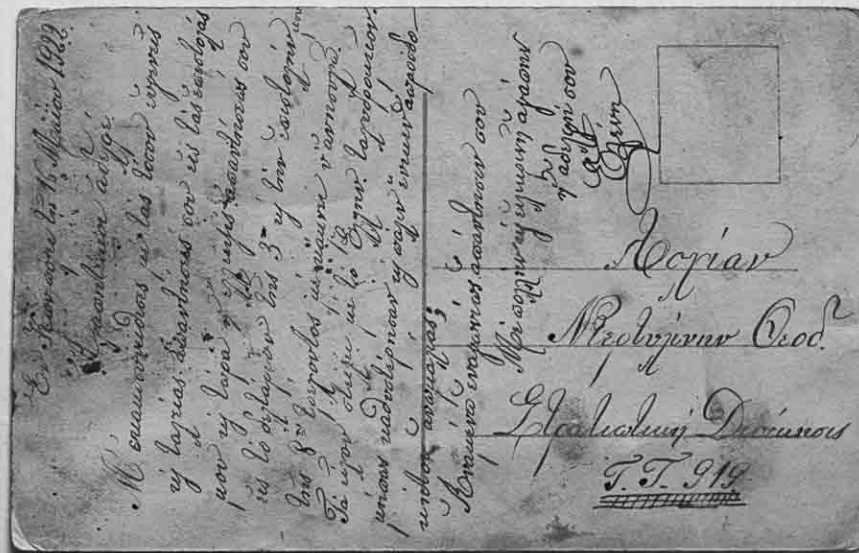


Kalle ja Sisko
 Helsingfors
 L. 10. 10. 1922
 T. T. 919



Constantinople. Palais des Princes, Prinkipo.

26
MB



Kalle ja Sisko
 Helsingfors
 L. 10. 10. 1922
 T. T. 919



ΜΕΣΗΜΕΡΙΑ Α. Ρωμύρας 1908



Vue générale de la ville de Rodos

museums to bring order to a chaotic past,











ancient findings in modern cities.





D M
AEMILIAE
RVANDAE
ANXVS
ECVDVS
DOMINI
CANDRSE
RACTGO
NVCIB M
ECHSES
TILE





Objects are permanent, unlike our thoughts, though still susceptible to the passage of time.

We have the objects, what about the stories?



Some Roman emperor left this as a sign of his reign in the region. For the locals it became "the Stone" and a different story was told about its origins. After centuries had passed and the emperor was forgotten, the locals believed that it was made for Alexander the Great. Mystical properties were assigned to it. Generations of women scratched its surface as they thought that drinking from the raspings would help them get pregnant. It was given a new identity.



Stories are fluid. They take new shapes, and when they come to a dead end they form new paths, the way water corrodes the earth. Stories change with time and thus assign new meaning to the world around us.



A skull belonging to the species *Homo Heidelbergensis*, ancestor of the Neanderthals.

Who was this person before becoming an exhibit? Well, we'll never know, that much is obvious. It is a skull and not a person, but not because of his death, rather because the story of his life that would make us see him as a person is lost.

Now this specimen has a new function as it contributes to the narrative of a museum, of a country, and of humanity that wants desperately to know its origins.



The more we know about someone's life, the more we see him as a person and less as a symbol or a thing.



Religious icons are presented in a non religious setting. They are admired as pieces of history or art, but people no longer pray before them, as they are not lying in an environment in which such an act is expected.



Manuscript page from the Lindisfarne Gospels, showing the calendar page for the month of June, with the zodiac sign Cancer and the feast of the Ascension.



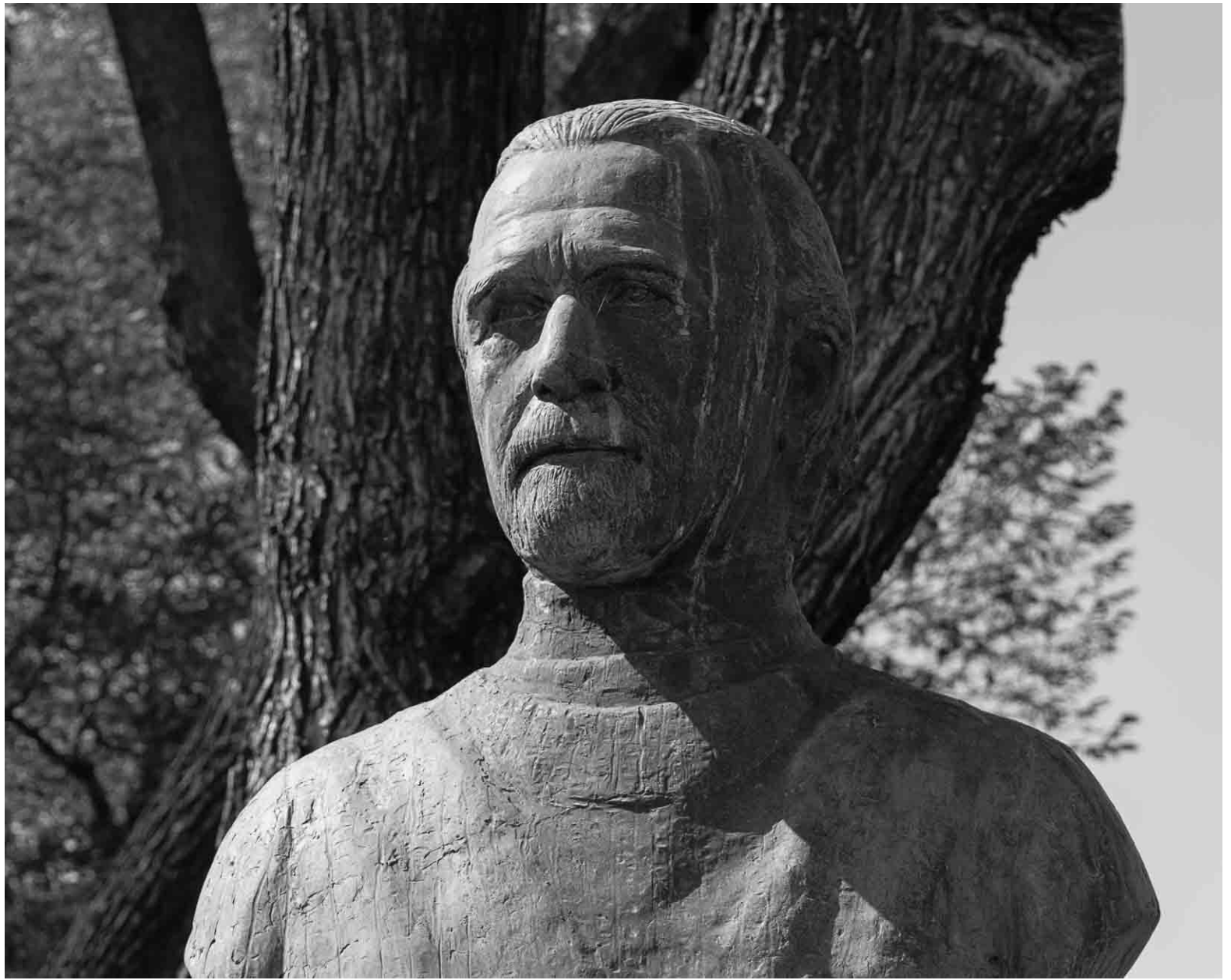
Manuscript page from the Lindisfarne Gospels, showing the calendar page for the month of June, with the zodiac sign Cancer and the feast of the Ascension.





We are fascinated by the human form. We keep reproducing it in materials like stone or paper, from ancient times to digital age. There is always some tenderness in the depictions used to memorialise people.















REVERENDISS. DOM. JOANNES CARONDELET,
ARCHIEPISCOPUS PANOBIANUS, PRIMAS SICILY,
PRÆPOSITUS S. DONATIANI BRUGEN, PERPETUUS FLANDRIÆ
CANCELLARIUS, DECANUS METROPOLITANA BISUNTINA
ABBAS COMMENDATARIUS B. MARIE MONTIS BENEDICTI
PRÆPOSITUS S. WALBURGIS FLISEN, AC S. PAVI SICINIENSIS,
CAROLI QUINTI ROM. IMP. SEMPER AUG. SECRETARIUS,
ALIORUMQUE CONSILIORUM IN BELGICA PRÆSES PRIMARIUS,
HUMANÆ FRAGILITATIS MEMOR IPSE SIBI POSUIT.
OBIIIT VII FEBRUARII ANNO A CHRISTO NATO MDXLV
ÆTATIS LXXV.

We want to remember the appearance of people, as if by forgetting it they would be truly gone.



ΕΥΘΑΛΙΑ
ΒΕΛΙΤΖΑΝΙΔΟΥ
1901 - 1988

And what about the depiction of people in these little shrines in our homes. They construct an image, not always true, and generally somewhat simplified, of the family life. The photos mark the close circle of relatives, alive or deceased, maybe in some important moments of their lives.

It is a statement: this is us, these are our stories and our achievements. We are not alone. We belong.









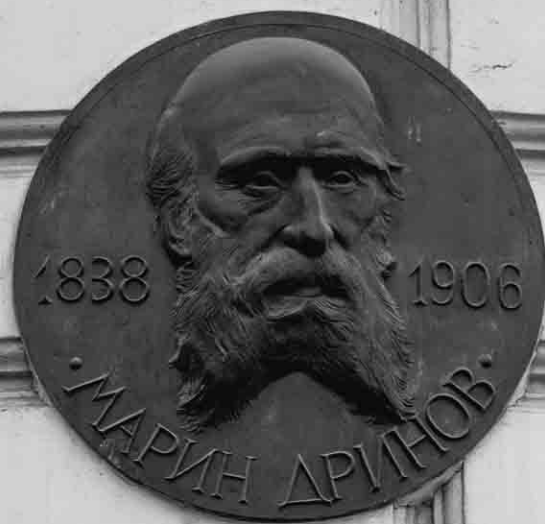


In public spaces, signs of the past can be seen everywhere, yet usually they pass unnoticed. They become part of the environment, thus neutral.

How many people have actually looked at this iron face?

Or payed attention to old inscriptions left by the side of the road, and abandoned churches, and memorials for the dead?

All remnants of some other era.



ΟΔΟΣ ΟΥΑΡΔ

ΚΑΤΑΣΚΕΥΑΣΘΕΙΣΑΥΤΟ

ΤΩΝΕΝΤΕΣΦΡΟΝΙΣΤΗΡΙΩ ΔΕΣΜΙΩΝ

ΕΝ ΕΒΟΥΤ

ΑΩΝΑ

WARD'S ROAD

MADE BY THE PRISONERS

OF THE PENITENTIARY

IN THE YEAR

1854

EX AERE PROSCRIPTORUM
FIT LOCUS PUNENDORUM
MDCCLXXXVI





What we have to keep in mind is that memory is linked to forgetfulness.
Memory is but an echo, a distortion of an event. Some elements fade, while others are being emphasised.



ΒΕΛΗΚΟΣ ΤΡΑΪΚΟΥ
ΕΚ ΓΡΑΔΟΜΟΡΙΟΥ
28 ΑΥΓΟΥΣΤΟΥ 1904

ΙΩΑΝΝΗΣ ΠΙΤΣΟΥΛΑΣ
ΔΙΔΑΚΤΑΛΟΣ
24 ΝΟΕΜΒΡΙΟΥ 1904

ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΣ ΛΟΥΗΣ
ΙΑΤΡΟΣ ΟΕΚΕΥΣ
24 ΙΟΥΝΙΟΥ 1904

ΑΓΙΟΥ

ΑΡΧΙΜΑΝΩΤΗΣ
ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΣ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΣ
ΕΚΤΕΛΕΣΗΣ ΝΕΟ-ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΤΙΚΟΥ
ΡΑΝΩΝ ΤΗ 24 ΜΕΡΕΩΣ 1944
ΚΑΤΙΝΑ Γ. ΓΕΡΓΙΑΔΟΥ
1904
ΕΚΤΕΛΕΣΗΣ ΝΕΟ-ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΤΙΚΟΥ
ΡΑΝΩΝ ΤΗ 24 ΜΕΡΕΩΣ 1944
ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΟΣ ΔΑΔΕΣΗΣ
ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΟΜΑΧΟΣ
1885 - 1979
ΠΑΠΑΖΟΓΛΟΥ
ΕΛΕΝΗ
ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΟΜΑΧΟΣ
1870 - 1956

1907 - 1948
ΕΛ.Θ.Κ.Ε.

We fear forgetfulness, we fear that what we perceive as important won't have the same value in the future or will be lost. We fear to confront what we already know – that something new and unknown will come.



But loss has its own importance, as it opens up space for the change to come.



All around us, there exist pieces of the past, either consciously preserved or left out of indifference. In any case, the past is there telling us stories about who we were and who we are. We see the memorabilia, we think we know a thing or two about them, but everything is up to interpretation.



There is beauty and fluidity in memory. Permanence is an illusion, decay is the law. The past is everywhere, and not just in abstract terms.

We only have to look.



