

**IN THE
BORDERLANDS
OF
MEMORY**

Ida-Mina Spyropoulou



**ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΘΕΣΣΑΛΙΑΣ
ΒΙΒΛΙΟΘΗΚΗ & ΚΕΝΤΡΟ ΠΛΗΡΟΦΟΡΗΣΗΣ
ΕΙΔΙΚΗ ΣΥΛΛΟΓΗ «ΓΚΡΙΖΑ ΒΙΒΛΙΟΓΡΑΦΙΑ»**

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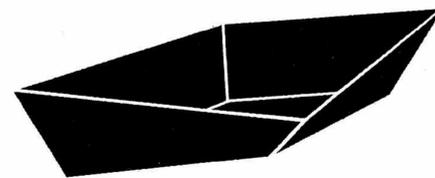
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ΣΠΥ

DIANA'S MANUAL

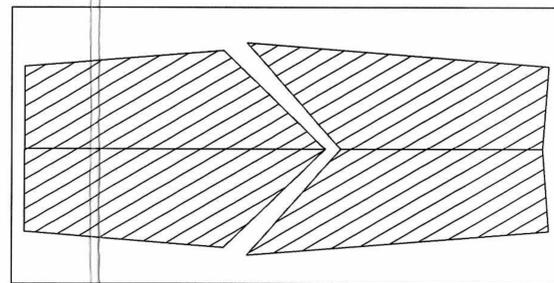


Materials

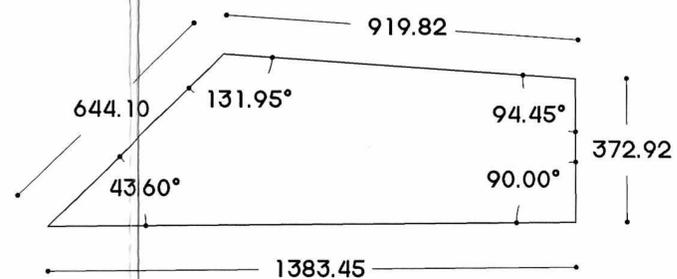
- 1 2 sheets of 2,50*1,25 m russian marine plywood 12 mm thick.
- 2 2 pieces of birch timber 100*300*50 mm.
- 3 1 piece of birch timber 130*550*20 mm.
- 4 Polyurethane adhesive for powerful bonding.
- 5 Box of screws.
- 6 Polyester filler.
- 7 Alkyd-based undercoat for enamel paint.
- 8 Enamel paint for wooden & metallic surfaces.
- 9 Rope \varnothing 10 mm.

Step 1

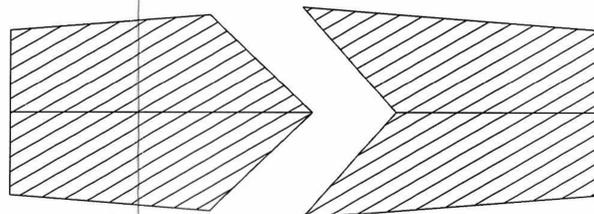
Draw and cut four identical pieces from the first plywood sheet.



Dimensions of one side-piece:

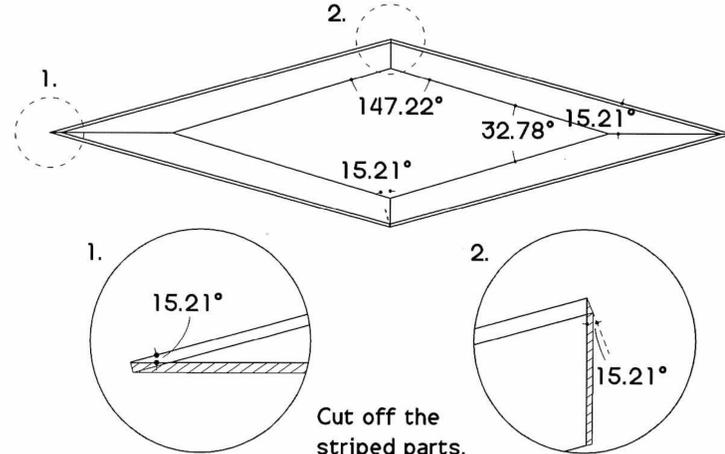


Keep in mind that you will need two groups of two mirrored pieces.



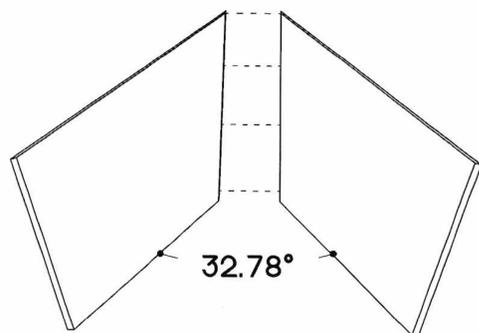
Step 2

Make the correct angles to the faces of the boat with a circular saw.



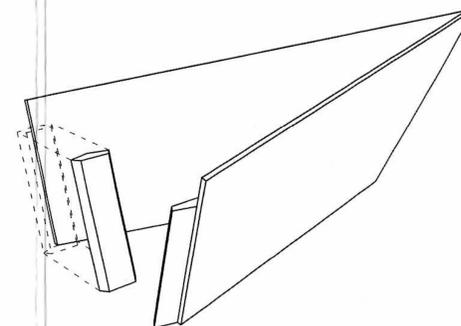
Mirror the same marks on the second side-piece. Repeat the same method for the last two pieces.

Check the dimensions and angles by positioning the sides as pictured above. Once sure, glue with the polyurethane adhesive the two opposing side-pieces together and tighten them with screws.

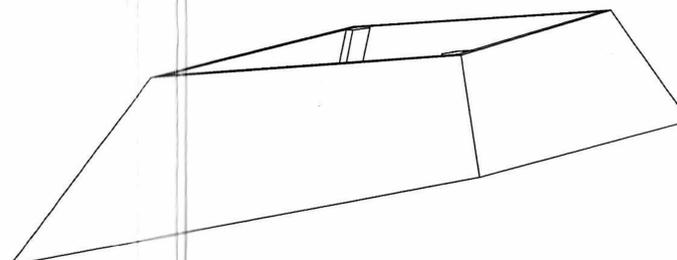
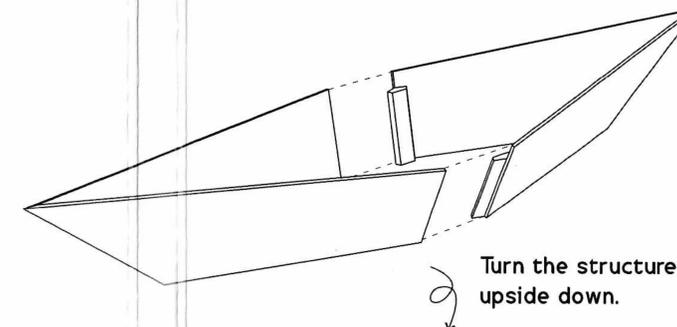


Step 3

The boat needs a strengthening frame. The two pieces of timber will keep the frame of the boat from crushing under water pressure. Keep the angles and attach them to the sides.

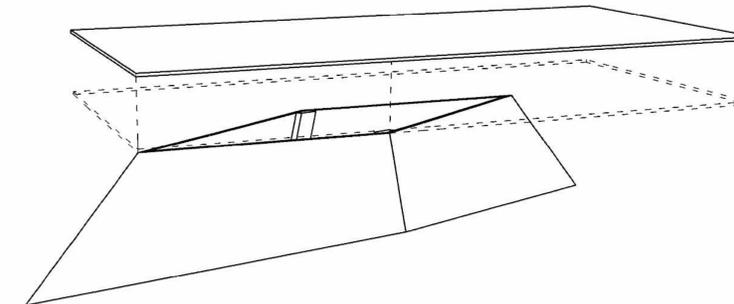


Bring together the two glued and secured sides of the bow and the stern. Glue and tighten them with screws as shown.

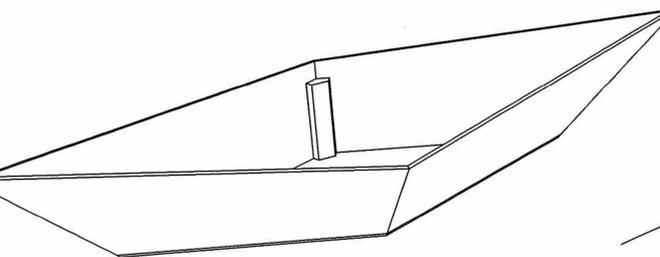
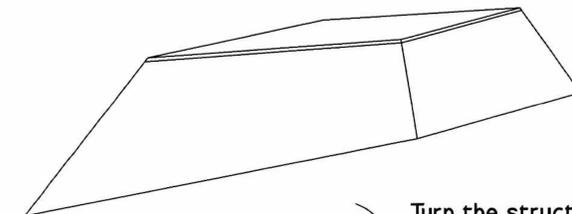


Step 4

The second plywood panel gets lowered on the sides of the boat. Attach it with adhesive and tighten it with screws. Be careful the screws don't exit the wood. Let it dry.



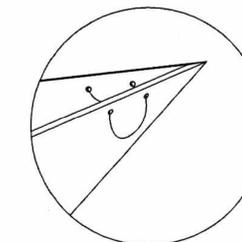
Cut the remaining panel off with a circular saw. Try to keep the angle the same as the walls of the boat.



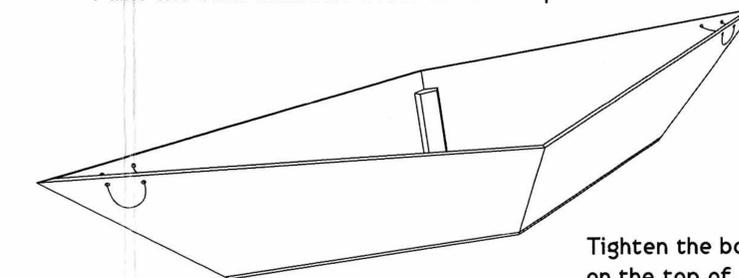
Step 5

Seal all the screw caps and possible holes with the polyester filler. Let it dry.

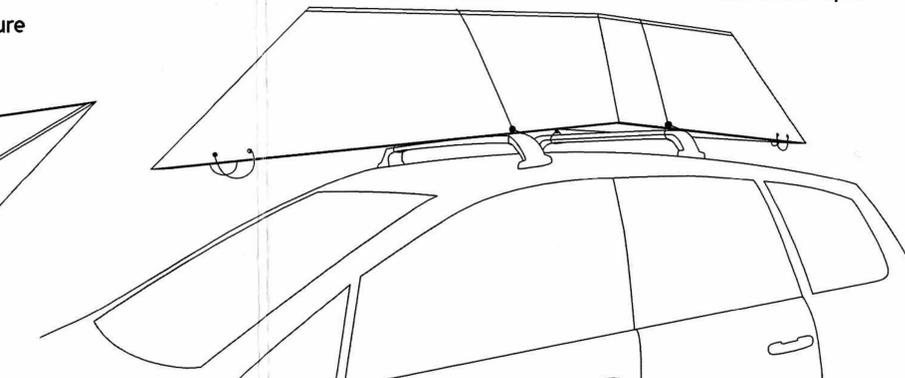
Drill two holes to each face of the boat and hoop a piece of rope through them to use it as a handle.



After sanding the excessive polyester filler away and rounding off edges, the boat gets covered three times with the alkyd-based undercoat. Let it dry. Paint the boat with two coats of enamel paint.



Tighten the boat on the top of the car with rope.



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Prof.: Lydia Mathews - Zissis Kotionis

IN THE BORDERLANDS OF MEMORY

MSc. in Post-industrial Design
University of Thessaly



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Merellä

Menen pian takaisin
sinne missä veneet lipuvat hiljaa
aalto putoaa toisen perään
kuin luotsi
katson sinun silmiisi

Majakkan loisteessa on hyvä
levähtää
lopussa on tehtävä vielä työ
ennen kuin pääsee suunnittelemaan
mintunvihreitä
huoneita

Saaristossa purjehtii puisia
matkalaukkuja täynnä
ruusuja
tukassa rusetti

Juhani Räisänen
25/05/17

UNIVERSITY

OPEN ACCESS

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TOPIC ONE

A Tale

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Intro

There will come a time when everything we know will turn to dust, they say. A time when everything will cease to exist, everything will be forgotten. Fortunately, we won't be around to see it. Right? But, like the winter winds come mid-autumn and paint the earth white, change comes unexpectedly.

It was early in the morning when something happened. Was it a joke that God played on humans, was it aliens testing our intelligence or was it nature, just taking its course? The fact is, life would be different from that moment on.

Morning

Somewhere in the world, on the dawn of that fateful day the first human awoke. He was lying on his bed, trying to steal a couple more minutes of sleep. He wasn't thinking of anything, no dreams, and no plans for the day, just lying. His eyes opened slowly, adjusting to the light. He turned to his side and became aware of the softness of the blanket, he blinked and his gaze shifted to the white wall just a few centimetres away from his face. A strange feeling started to grow in him. Soon, with no warning, he jumped up on all fours and frantically tossed his head from side to side. With a cry of agony, he got up quickly and realised he was trapped within impenetrable

high reaching white obstacles. On one side, behind hanging soft material, a faint light stole its way to the room. Afraid to touch, but enormously curious he held out his hand and pulled the cloth away from what he assumed would be his way out to from that cage he was in. Freedom. But how could he reach it? Another obstacle, this time transparent was preventing his escape.

All he wanted was to flee. He felt vulnerable, unsafe and he couldn't recognise anything around him. Panic was building up inside him and all he could do was to search for the exit, even if it meant that he had to force his way out. He started hammering his fist against the window with increasing force, but it didn't give in. Frustrated, he tore down the curtain and let his eyes take in the view that was unfolding before him. He barely could see the sky, a thin strip of blue, behind monstrously tall and motionless grey giants. Suddenly, he didn't feel the need to get out anymore. He crawled back to the bed, which was soft and still warm and didn't seem likely to hurt him. He buried himself beneath the covers and closed his

eyes. His mind was filled with terror and wonder.

At the same time somewhere else, a woman got jerked out of sleep by a cry. She got up quickly and ventured towards the source of the cry. She went through a door and bent over a crib, took the baby tenderly in her arms and caressed its cheek. Realising that something was not quite right, a man rose from the bed and cautiously entered the room not fully understanding what he was seeing around him. His eyes fell upon the human that was cradling a small bundle. The mother, aware of someone standing behind her, turned to face him. She felt immediately threatened by the intruder and tried to protect the child in her lap, her hand put up defensively against the man. The child began to cry again and the man made a step forward, trying to come across as calmly as possible. He opened his mouth, but nothing comprehensible came out.

He stopped to look at that human being standing before him. It was of the opposite sex and he felt a strong

physical attraction towards her. He was drawn to that woman. But as he observed her and how she held the baby, which was clearly hers and towards which an affection inside him was growing, he felt the urge to protect that woman and care for her and the infant. So, he crouched slightly, spread his arms towards her with the palms looking up and tried to smile reassuringly. The woman, still in defence, started backing away until she reached the wall. He slowly approached her and touched the fingertips of her upright hand, until their hands flattened. He took her hand into his and drew her closer to him. She, still cautious, didn't oppose to his touch and let herself be pulled into a gentle embrace. In those brief moments she felt a multitude of feelings, feelings of affection towards the little child, fear and the need to safeguard it and herself. Not knowing where she was, what was happening to her and who she and the man in front of her were, was unnerving. When their hands touched she knew that he could offer her a safe haven from all those feelings she couldn't handle. She eased her-

self into his arms and he kissed her forehead softly. The child between them stopped crying.

A homeless man had spent the whole night outside on a cold hard bench in the outskirts of the city park. A bottle of strong spirit lay beside him, half empty. The first rays of the sun started warming his freezing feet and he shifted beneath the newspapers that served him as a blanket. A sparrow was chirping nearby and so he woke up. Blue sky above him, warming source of light and green foliage everywhere around him. He felt happy. He sat up on the bench, a little dazed and observed his surroundings. They looked peaceful. More sparrows were gathering around him.

His eyes fell on the bottle laying on the ground. He took it in his hands and stared at it. It seemed to have some liquid content trapped inside of it. He figured he had to open it to find out. In the end of the neck of the bottle, something of different material was blocking the liquid. The man started pulling and pounding it, until

out of mistake he grabbed and turned it. The cap loosened and he was able to open the bottle. He sniffed the opening and a strong scent pierced his nostrils. It was sweet and bitter at the same time, but it had an enormous effect on his brain. He felt the urge to taste it, and so he did. The first sips were cautious and small but the burning sensation in his throat and later in his belly was so satisfying that he kept on drinking. After a few more gulps the heat had spread all over his body and he realised his head didn't ache anymore. Happier than before, he straightened up feeling a bit dizzy and tried to bounce around mimicking the sparrows.

His attention got distracted by the barking of a dog that was running playfully towards him. Confused to see that it had four limbs, like himself, he fell down on all his fours and tried to balance himself with no great success. With the first step he took like this, dizziness overcame him and he fell on the ground. The dog started jumping around him and he tried to get a hold of it. Once it calmed down he took the courage and patted it on the head. Both considered

themselves as friends from that moment on. Leaving the sparrows behind, they ventured towards the exit of the park, him crawling and the dog walking.

Once outside, after having sniffed every corner of the park, the surrounding environment changed completely. The green world of the park gave way to tall grey buildings with light reflecting rectangles on their façades. Curious to explore, they crossed the now empty street and wondered about the big metal structures that seemed to have four legs, standing on both sides of the street. They came to a halt in front of a bus stop, because it had something portrayed on it that made the homeless man realise that he wasn't the same as his fellow companion. A poster with photographs of two human beings like himself was attached to the bus stop. They were standing on two legs and seemed happy about it. So the man took hold of a post nearby and dragged himself up into a standing position. It didn't feel funny and with the first step he took, although, from a higher altitude, he felt comfortable in his body. He went to sit

down at the bus stop and with a hand on his companion's head he stopped to contemplate about life.

These were just some examples of what was happening to the human kind that very day. All around the globe, as the day advanced, people were waking up and experiencing similar incidents and feelings. Helplessness, vulnerability, panic and emotional disorder being just a few of them.

They couldn't remember anything, they didn't even know if there was something to remember. The only reason why they had to believe that there was something prior to that day, was the existence of all the odd objects, the buildings, the machines and the living beings around them. They had no memory of ever having created them, no memory of ever having used them, no knowledge of how to use them in future and no idea where they came from. Living in a city was now more dangerous than to live in a jungle. Everything around you could kill you, even your own kind if food was not accessible. Many died

out of mistakes, many killed themselves because they couldn't handle what was happening to them. Not knowing is a harsh feeling.

The human kind had no plan for the day and no plan for tomorrow. It was born again in the modern world without a trace of its past, just an image of it around to betray it.

People that had survived the first days of the new era began to form a life with what they had. Those were the ones who were more tough and able to confront the grim reality. They managed to overcome the feeling of helplessness and tried to form a troop of people, like a community. In these groups some became the leaders, ruling over the troop and giving orders, anointing some to be hunters and collectors, others defenders. But that isn't really relevant for they had now a past and examples they could follow or avoid. They had a plan, although vague, about the future. They had an impression of the present and believed that future wouldn't be much different.

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About the Tale

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The tale told above is a personal attempt of writing a piece of science fiction. It deals with the human behaviour, a phenomenon largely studied by Anthropology. As a science Anthropology draws upon knowledge from the social and biological sciences as well as the humanities and physical sciences. Anthropology is the study of humans, past and present.¹ This is the term given by the American Anthropological Association.

Science fiction has many subgenres, with social science fiction being one of them. Social science fiction, also defined as “soft”, is less concerned with technology/space opera (space warfare, adventure, interplanetary battles, and romance) and is more imbued with ideas from anthropology, cultural studies, sociology,

psychology, studies of human character. In other words, it “absorbs and discusses anthropology”, and speculates about human behavior and interactions.²

What if...? The question “what if?” is a way to start answering questions beyond human perception, like:

What if one day the past ceased to exist?

The tale tries to figure out what would happen if the human mind went blank, if the human mind became a tabula rasa and everything learned would vanish.

The English term for Latin tabula rasa is “blank slate” or better “erased slate” referring to the wax

covered tablet the Romans used as a writing surface.³ The epistemological idea that an individual's mind is formed and filled by the experience and perception gained in the external world dates back to the writings

**"[.] TO BREAK FORTH
BLOODILY, THEN THE
PAST MUST BE OBLITER-
ATED AND A NEW START
MADE.[.] LET US NOW
START FRESH WITH-
OUT REMEMBRANCE,
RATHER THAN LIVE FOR-
WARD AND BACKWARD
AT THE SAME TIME."**

**- T.H. WHITE FROM
"THE ONCE AND
FUTURE KING" (1958)^a**

of Aristotle (*De Anima - Περί Ψυχῆς*) and is further developed by the stoics, stating that human mind starts blank. The empiricists enriching the

term *tabula rasa*, argue that it is the condition of human mind before ideas have been imprinted on it by the reaction of the senses to the external world of objects.

If we presume that humans act on and live by their experiences and memories, then erasing them would mean extinguishing their past, resources and existence. The narration attempts to answer the question what would happen to humanity, as we know it, if one day humans forgot everything there is to forget, like history, religion, culture, language, perception of things, human behaviour, blood relations, and friendships. That is, if humans lost cognition, regarding everything they have acquired through thought, experience, and the senses.⁴

Due to the fact that human experimentation is morally wrong and illegal, the information we have about human behaviour and its understanding has been and is being collected through observation, anthropological studies and behaviourist researches. Many scientists have conducted research on animals and especially on non-human primates because of

their psychological and physiological similarity to humans. Behaviourism is mainly concerned with observable behaviour and emphasises the role of environmental factors in influencing behaviour. Behaviour can thus be reduced to a simple stimulus - response association. However, there are branches of the humanities, such as Humanism that reject the approach of behaviourism, because they sustain that humans have free will and are not susceptible to the laws of science when taking decisions. Furthermore, they view humans as unique and not to be compared with animals. According to Sigmund Freud's psychodynamic approach, behaviourism doesn't take into account the influence of unconscious mind on behaviour and that humans are born with instincts. Moreover, biological psychology states that behaviour is strongly influenced by chromosomes and hormones. They endorse the role of nature over nurture, a thesis which suggests that all behaviour has a physical/organic cause.⁵

If we wish to expand further on the question previously posed of mental blankness and how it can af-

fect humanity, the tale ignores the studies of cognitive psychology. Cognitive psychology is the scientific study of human mind as information processor. Between stimulus and response occurs a mediational process including memory, thinking, creativity, consciousness, problem solving, perception, attention and language.⁶ Some cognitive processes, including recognition, language, planning, problem-solving, decision-making and creativity, can operate effectively without a contribution from memory.⁷ The general assumption is that instincts, impulses and primitive reflexes long suppressed by social norms, ethics and morality, will prevail, emerge and take course of action. The primary instincts observed in man are self-preservation, nutrition, sex drive and herd.⁸ While the first three instincts stay active for short periods leaving one to govern when time is right, the last is the one that controls the individual and keeps him from yielding to instincts, like a solitary animal would without order. Sigmund Freud came to synthesize all this to the known tripartite theory of personality (Id, Ego, Super-Ego). In

according to this theory self-preservation, nutrition and sex drive are considered as parts of Id, while herd as part of Super-Ego. When Super-Ego is removed, Ego is modelled by Id and, later, by the new situation created.⁹

**"THE FUTURE IS WHAT
WE CONSTRUCT FROM
WHAT WE REMEMBER OF
THE PAST - THE PRESENT
IS THE TIME OF INSTAN-
TANEOUS REVELATION."**

- LAWRENCE WEINER^b

will have lost his memory and every linkage to life prior to the moment of loss. There will be no remnants of things past to indicate the forthcoming, no hints and no mistakes to learn from. Man will be free of the weight of the past and he will not be absorbed with contemplation about the future.



According to the tale, after the big mental blackout man needs to readjust himself to the new unknown environment and to the unfamiliar situation, this can be critical for his further existence and sanity. He will make mistakes and he will misinterpret several situations. The future will then be untold, because he won't have traces of the past to follow. He

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Notes

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2 Hirst, K. Kris, "Social Science Fiction" (2016), <https://www.thoughtco.com/social-science-fiction-170849>.

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6 McLeod, S. A, "Cognitive Psychology" (2015), <http://www.simplypsychology.org/cognitive.html>.

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8 Trotter, Wilfred, "Sociological Applications of the Psychology of Herd Instinct", p. 47, in "Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War", New York, Cosimo, Inc. (2007).

9 "Ego (Εγώ)", Grande Encyclopédie Larousse - Grande Encyclopaedia Britannica, Hellas, Amarousio Attiki, Πάπυρος (Papyrus) (1997).

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a X-Men: Apocalypse film (2016), Bryan Singer (dir.).

b Hans Ulrich Obrist, "What Is the Future of Art?" (2016), <https://www.artsy.net/article/hans-ulrich-obrist-the-future-of-art-according-to-hans-ulrich-obrist>.

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TOPIC TWO

Crisis of Future

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'LET'S BREAK OUT OF THE HORRIBLE SHELL OF WISDOM AND THROW OURSELVES LIKE PRIDE-RIPENED FRUIT INTO THE WIDE, CONTORTED MOUTH OF THE WIND! LET'S GIVE OURSELVES UTTERLY TO THE UNKNOWN, NOT IN DESPERATION BUT ONLY TO REPLENISH THE DEEP WELLS OF THE ABSURD!'

From the Futurist Manifesto^a

Present

The Futurists didn't want to be part of the past as they state in their Manifesto of Futurism. They believed, one wastes his powers when worshipping the past. They wanted to destroy museums, libraries and academies of all kind, because they aimed to liberate the world from the weight of its past. Several of them enlisted early and fought in the WWI, believing the world should be cleansed through warfare, the old order destroyed to make way for the future. The Futurists had an obsession with newness.

By erasing the past, a non-pre-defined future is possible. Seizing this opportunity one can live and feel the present as it is unfolding in front of him. As Henri Bergson states in his book *Matter and Memory*, (*Matière et mémoire*, 1896): "the body is an ever advancing boundary between the future and past, as a pointed end, which our past is continually driving forward into our future. My present is that which interests me, which lives for me, and in a word, that which summons me to action; in contrast,

my past is essentially powerless. [...]

[...] The essence of time is that it goes by; time already gone by is the past, and we call the present the instant in which it goes by. But there can be no question here of a mathematical instant. No doubt there is an ideal present - a pure conception, the indivisible limit which separates past from future. But the real, concrete, live present - that of which I speak when I speak of my present perception - that present necessarily occupies a duration. What I call "my present" has one foot in my past and another in my future. In my past, first, because "the moment in which I am speaking is already far from me"; in my future, next, because this moment is impending over the future: it is to the future that I am tending, and could I fix this indivisible present, this infinitesimal element of the curve of time, it is the direction of the future that it would indicate. The psychical state, then, that I call "my present," must be both a perception of the immediate past and a determination of the immediate future. Now the immediate past, in so far as it is perceived, is sensation, and

the immediate future, in so far as it is being determined, is action or movement. My present, then, is both sensation and movement; since my present forms an undivided whole, then the movement must be linked with the sensation, must prolong it in action. Whence I conclude that my present consists in a joint system of sensations and movements. [...]

[...] our present is the very materiality of our existence, that is to say, a system of sensations and movements and nothing else."¹

The words of Henri Bergson give backing to the beliefs of the Futurists who wanted to represent the moment with all its movement, its dynamism and the energy. He brings the action back to the present, in a logical and substantial way. The dynamism and the energy of a person, his very life and possibilities are located and can be forged only in the present. The present is a barge, on which, although being shaky, one could leap towards the future.

"[...] HE WAS ONE OF THOSE RARE INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE TOTALLY FOCUSED IN TIME. MOST PEOPLE AREN'T. THEY LIVE THEIR LIVES AS A SORT OF TEMPORAL BLUR AROUND THE POINT WHERE THEIR BODY ACTUALLY IS - ANTICIPATING THE FUTURE, OR HOLDING ON TO THE PAST. THEY'RE USUALLY SO BUSY THINKING ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS NEXT THAT THE ONLY TIME THEY EVER FIND OUT WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW IS WHEN THEY COME TO LOOK BACK ON IT."

- "WYRD SISTERS" BY TERRY PRATCHETT^b

Future

“Utopia” is derived from the Greek prefix “ou-” (οὐ), meaning “not”, and topos (τόπος), “place”. In Thomas More’s (1478-1535) famous work, “*Utopia*” (1516), it is used to mean both an ideal society and also one that doesn’t exist anywhere. The ideal society is usually based in future and it critiques the present state of the society. Later, the word utopia also came to be used to refer to a society that did not exist because it could not exist; it depicted an impossible dream.²

Envisioning a new world, like the one in the tale, you aim to create a dimension where all is possible and

i “ou-” is a prefix implying deprivation, negation or absence. These three states are similar to each other but have different meanings. Deprivation means being kept away from something that matters to you or something that you are in need of, which can cause great pain. Negation means denying something, denying its existence or simply not wanting something. Finally, absence implies something nonexistent that doesn’t have an effect on you.

plausible and this can happen by creating a place in no time. A place that belongs both to the history and to the utopia it depicts. You create a bridge from the past to the future and transcend time by arriving to the end of history, the beginning.³

Man has always speculated the future, either writing about it, speaking about it or just imagining it. He is immensely intrigued by it and by all the possibilities it withholds. By engaging himself in the search for the truth, he produces huge amounts of possible “futures” that will probably never be. These scenarios are very probable and can indeed one day happen, but once they are created even just as an idea, they have happened and thus belong to the past. “It is a nullification of the future by making everything possible present” states M. Foucault in his lectures at the Collège de France on the *The Hermeneutics of the Subject* (1981 - 1982).

Paul Valéry in his essay “*Notre Destin et Les Lettres*” in 1937 writes that “The future, like everything else, is no longer quite what it used to be (L’avenir est comme le reste: il n’est plus ce qu’il était)”.

According to Tadeusz Ślawek, when questioned about the crisis of utopia, "utopian thinking is a form of a never fulfilled prophecy (if it did become fulfilled, it would lose the power of hope), a never realised future (should it be realised, it would cease to be future and would become another highly imperfect present)."⁴

If realised, any utopia would be imperfect. There are many factors and criteria that affect the idealistic character of the future. Utopians don't take into account the identity of the individual, the differences between individuals (age, religion, culture, memories) and the expectations of each, when envisioning their new and brilliant future. One cannot even state that humans are perfect, because the ability of man to make progress is absolutely indefinite. When criticising the present and imagining a different future, one is only a dreamer, it takes a lot more in order to become a utopian. One needs to establish a mode of thinking based on ones dreams, hopes and intuitions. Even so, adopting a mode of thinking is still not enough to make a utopia perfect, if put into

practice. We are focused on specific fields and areas of social, political or legal practices without thinking of them as an all-encompassing socio-politico-legal system. According

**BACK THEN PEOPLE HAD
A VERY POSITIVE IDEA
ABOUT THE FUTURE [...]
AND YET NOW WE ACT
LIKE WE'RE PASSENGERS
ON A BUS WITH NO SAY
IN WHERE IT'S GOING,
WITH NO REALIZATION
THAT WE COLLECTIVELY
WRITE THE FUTURE EV-
ERY DAY AND CAN MAKE
IT SO MUCH BETTER.**

**- BRAD BIRD,
DIRECTOR OF
TOMORROWLAND
FILM (DISNEY)^d**

to the above, our vision of future is strongly affected by our past and it gets constantly tarnished through our expectations.

When one enters a system where some properties are uncertain, or cannot be assessed, then one cannot possibly estimate nor predict the actions that are going to take place in the system. There is no sense in speculating about the future, because there are so many potential outcomes (Uncertainty Principle Quantum Mechanics). When an observation takes place it affects the system making one of the several states real (Schrödinger's cat state), which will then be entirely different from the one envisioned.

If we took under consideration all the factors and could predict every individual's doings and decisions, even then the future wouldn't unfold as imagined. As said, utopia is an ideal society that doesn't exist. It is without place and in no time.

Humans have constructed many unimplemented futures that, due to the facts above, would become highly imperfect presents if realised.

The future can't be put in effect by

a man. How the future will unfold before him goes beyond the capacities of an individual to determine. Man can only picture what is to come. Doing so, he is not creating the all new world, custom made, but instead, the solid foundations of his very present.

**URSULA K. LE GUIN SAID
"ANYTHING AT ALL CAN
BE SAID TO HAPPEN [IN
THE FUTURE] WITHOUT
FEAR OF CONTRADIC-
TION FROM A NATIVE.
THE FUTURE IS A SAFE,
STERILE LABORATO-
RY FOR TRYING OUT
IDEAS IN, A MEANS OF
THINKING ABOUT RE-
ALITY, A METHOD."^{9e}**

Past

**WE ARE NOT GIVEN TO
SEE NOR HEAR THE
FUTURE. OTHERWISE
IT'S NOT FUTURE. IT'S
CALLED "PRESENT".**

**- RICHARD
ARTSCHWAGER¹**

The future is still to come and may very well not be. Being thus preoccupied about the future is foolish, according to M. Foucault. Because future is nothingness. It does not exist, it is unknown and unpredictable. We can only project a vision onto it, based on nothing. Or else, the future preexists and, if it preexists, it is predetermined, and so we cannot control it.

The foolish (*anoētoi*) carelessly neglect good things, even when these are present goods, because they are constantly concerned about the future and therefore live in emptiness.

The sensible (*phronimoi*) people, on the other hand, are turned towards the past and make use of memory. The past is a reliability because it cannot not have been, it is the most assured possession.⁵

Henri Bergson perfectly describes in his book *Matter and Memory* (1896) that "the already perceived, is existing and therefore is already past.

When we think this present as going to be, it exists not yet, and when we think it as existing, it is already past. [...] in truth, every perception is already memory. Practically, we perceive only the past, the pure present being the invisible progress of the past gnawing into the future.

To live only in the present, to respond to a stimulus by the immediate reaction which prolongs it, is the mark of the lower animals: the man who proceeds in this way is a man of impulse. But he who lives in the past for the mere pleasure of living there, and in whom recollections emerge into the light of consciousness without any advantage for the present situation, is hardly better fitted for action: here we have no man of impulse, but a dreamer. Between these

two extremes lives the happy disposition of memory docile enough to follow with precision all the outlines of the present situation, but energetic enough to resist all other appeal. Good sense, or practical sense, is probably nothing but this.”⁶

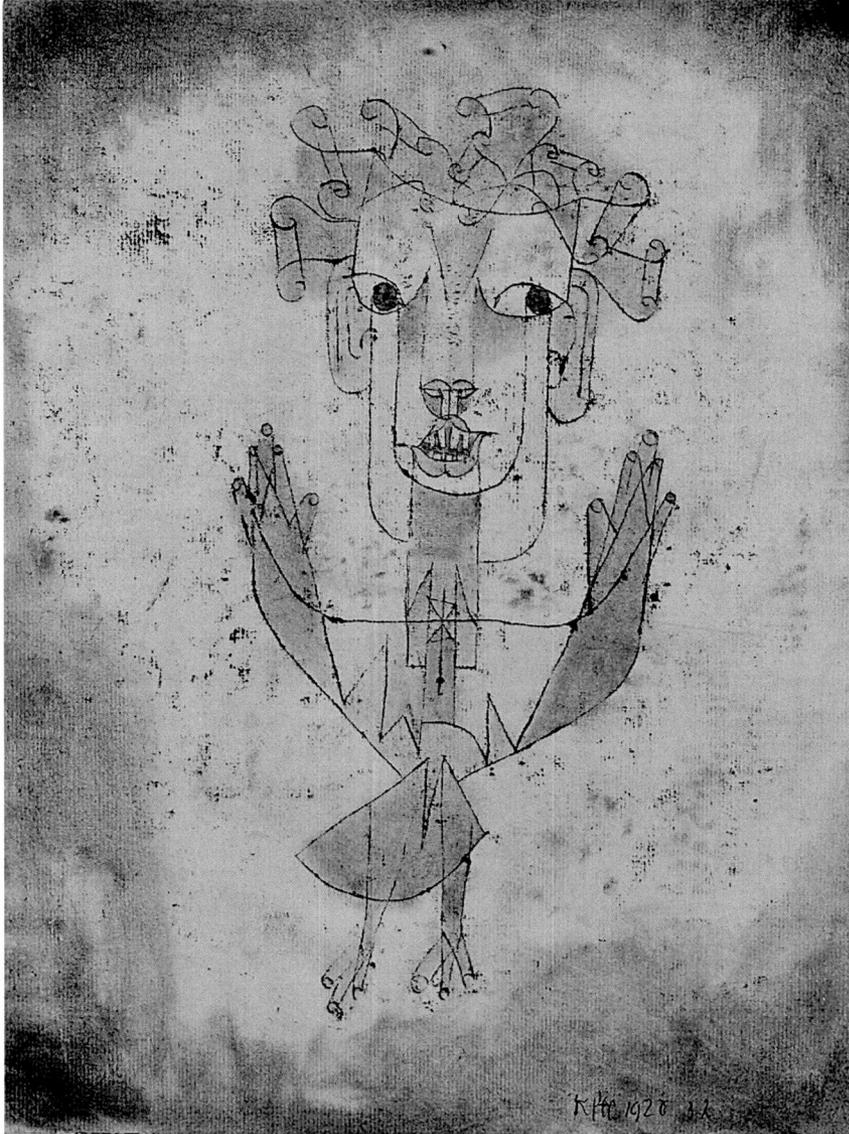
Consequently, we can say that reflecting on memories coincides with an attitude towards the future. Paul Klee’s *Angelus Novus* “shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows

skyward. This storm is what we call progress.”⁷

A major change came to the Western thought when the notion of looking at a memory was accepted as the equivalent of looking at the future. Progress, meaning the reflection on memories, coincides with an attitude towards the future. For the ancient Greek philosophers what lies in front of our eyes is the past and not the future. We advance into the future with our backs turned.⁸

**”THE FUTURE FLOWED
INTO THE PAST, AND
THERE WAS A LOT MORE
PAST THAN THERE
WAS FUTURE, BUT HE
WAS STRUCK BY THE
FACT THAT WHAT IT
FLOWED THROUGH ALL
THE TIME WAS NOW.”**

**- “REAPER MAN” BY
TERRY PRATCHETT⁹**



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"Angelus Novus" by Paul Klee, retrieved from <http://www.lifo.gr/team/almanak/58664>.

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TOPIC THREE

A Memory

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Amnesia

It is sensible to look into the past for guidance. But what happens when the past has vanished without a trace, when there is nothing left or even worse, when all is forgotten?

The past consists of memories and experiences that a person has gained during his life. Memory, in particular, refers to knowledge that is stored in the brain, and to the processes of acquiring, consolidating and retrieving such knowledge. The store for the lasting retention of information and skills is called Long-Term Memory (LTM).¹ Knowledge can remain as long-term memory indefinitely. If there is a problem in “remembering” or reactivating knowledge, in other words, if there is a deficit in conscious remem-

bering then we are confronted with some kind of memory loss. Amnesia (a borrowing from the Greek language: ἀμνηστία meaning “forgetfulness”; from ἀ- (a-), meaning “without”, and μνηστός (mnestos), meaning “remembered”)² is a dysfunction of memory that can be caused by traumatic brain injuries (TBI), neurodegenerative diseases due to neuronal deterioration, psychological traumas, alcohol intoxication or drugs.¹

When the appearance of amnesia is sudden, it rules out dementia, Alzheimer’s and other diseases that can affect indirectly the memory, like Parkinson’s or Huntington’s disease. These are chronic neurodegenerative diseases that start slow and affect certain areas of the brain and destroy brain cells, leading to the general de-

cline of mental abilities.

Memory loss resulting from head injury, substance abuse, or epilepsy is referred to as organic amnesia. The causes are of organic origin as opposed to the psychological cause of dissociative amnesia, in which the patient can unconsciously deny the traumatic experience in order to avoid emotional pain.³

As previously stated, there is a distinction between amnesia and other milder memory problems that are symptoms of age-related memory decline, depression or developmental learning difficulties, and the essential evidence here is the severity of the learning deficit, as in not being able to acquire new information. An amnesiacⁱⁱ must have been diagnosed with a learning deficit that

i For some cognitive processes which can operate without a contribution from memory, see p. 16, n. 7.

ii "Amnesiac", Noun: a person affected by amnesia. Adjective: Also, amnesic: displaying the symptoms of amnesia, Thesaurus Dictionary.

is fairly isolated, meaning that other aspects of cognition remain intact. The preservation of attention, working memory and general reasoning abilities differentiate the amnesic patient from the patient who has memory problems in the context of global cognitive decline (e.g. dementia or delirium).⁴

The types of LTM are explicit and implicit memory. Explicit memory, which is declarative, is comprised from memories that are consciously available. Like episodic memory, which is responsible for storing information about events in time, or like semantic memory that stores knowledge of factual information about the world. Implicit memory on the other hand, is the procedural memory that refers to the use of objects and the movements of the body. It does not require conscious thought and is non-declarative. A human acquires skills, habits and knowledge unconsciously, which are then slowly formed into a long-term muscle memory through repetition. Examples of muscle memory are found in many activities of the everyday life, like riding a bicycle, typing in a PIN code,

playing a musical instrument.⁵

The two common types of organic amnesia that regard impairments in explicit and implicit memory, are retrograde and anterograde amnesia. Retrograde amnesia is the condition in which memories, created prior to the event that caused the memory loss, are lost while new memories can still be created.⁶ Anterograde amnesia is the loss of the ability to create new memories after the onset of amnesia, leading to partial or complete inability to recall the recent past, while long-term memories from before the event remain intact.⁷

Patients that display both of these conditions but can show apparently preserved intelligence and also a normal preservation of working memory (the recall of information encountered in the immediate past) are referred to as global amnesics. Patients with transient global amnesia can remember only deeply encoded facts of their own past.⁸

In order to recap, memory can either become a mental image (as in recall or recognition) that is formed through the process of retrieving and reactivating knowledge consciously,

or it can be translated into a motor output, which means that knowledge is accessed impulsively. These two forms of “remembering” can be labeled and therefore individuated as declarative and non-declarative memory respectively.

When an event results in amnesia the past doesn't vanish or get destroyed, only the link to the patient's recollections gets severed. The mental images can no longer exercise an effect on the person and the person cannot act upon them. In this way only can the past and memory be abolished, in the words of Henry Bergson.⁹

Even if the memories have vanished or faded away, there may exist a catalyst that will help a certain forgotten mental image to arise without conscious effort. This event, caused by everyday occurrences that evoke recollections of the past, is a sub-component of memory, called involuntary memory, or involuntary autobiographical memory.¹⁰ Anything can elicit recollections, from a smell to a taste or even an image encountered unexpectedly. The recall of the past event comes with a surprise and can

bring forth a chain of memories associated with it. Marcel Proust in his novel *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu* (1913) comes across a wondrous discovery of himself, once he brings to his lips a teaspoon with crumbs of a sweet cake called petites madeleines that he had previously softened in tea. The moment the sweet mix of tea and cake crumbs touches his palate, his heart and mind are overcome with a powerful joy, the origin of which he does not know. The precious essence that fills him is not in him, but it's himself. A mental image floods his brain and he struggles to contain it, in order to feel extraordinary for a little longer. Proust describes the discovery of a long forgotten memory of his hometown and his life back then, which he had suppressed.¹¹

**YOU HAVE TO BEGIN
 TO LOSE YOUR MEMO-
 RY, IF ONLY IN BITS AND
 PIECES, TO REALIZE
 THAT MEMORY IS WHAT
 MAKES OUR LIVES. LIFE
 WITHOUT MEMORY IS
 NO LIFE AT ALL ... OUR
 MEMORY IS OUR CO-
 HERENCE, OUR REASON,
 OUR FEELING, EVEN
 OUR ACTION. WITHOUT
 IT, WE ARE NOTHING...**

— LUIS BUNUEL^a



In the twilight

After yet another nightmare my mother, while consoling me, told me to think of an image that would comfort me and make me happy. After browsing through my memories I chose the one where I was fishing with my parents on a boat, having let it glide on the lake. This choice may have to do with my interpretation of bravery at the time. Rowing on a shaky boat, in a dark lake full of big fish, algae, water lilies and no other soul in any proximity, took a whole lot of courage from a child.

Growing up, I frequently used this memory and with time, it changed. Now, the sun is setting and the moon is rising, leaving us rowing in the twilight on the dark waters. I see this through my eyes that are spying on the scene through the woods on the shore. Memories grow sweeter with time, they say. The Finnish people describe this as gold-plated memories.

I still use this image today, even though the nightmares have ceased. I revisit my lake with my boat whenever I can't fall asleep and it imme-

diately relaxes me. It is a habit that has become a sort of a motor mechanism. The recall of the memory happens mostly unconsciously, as it is not really a deliberate thought. Over

**MY FORTHCOM-
ING VOYAGE WOULD
FOCUS ON THE
CHILDHOOD DREAM
OF TAKING THE
SIMPLEST OF
MEANS - A SHEET OF
PAPER AND A LIT-
TLE IMAGINATION
- TO CREATE A VEHI-
CLE WITH WHICH TO
TRAVEL INTO UNLIMITED
REALMS OF FANTASY.**

— FRANK BOLTER^b

the years it has become part of my non-declarative memory. It is a form of "remembering", which involves reactivation of knowledge in such a

way that it can be translated into a motor output.

Memory loss is not always permanent and total. Memories of childhood often survive and can lead to a recovery, although it may take a while to get a grasp on them or any other memory. The journey of recovering is a tedious task. It takes a lot of self-exploration and self-care to lead oneself to reparation and recovery. Sometimes the only thing one needs is a stimulus that will evoke a thought. Letting oneself to ease into a state where one can access inaccessible parts of the memory, can also be of help. It is known that memories can be retrieved efficiently when an individual is in the same state of consciousness as they were when the memory was formed.¹²

State - dependent memory / retrieval is where a person's physical state can influence their ability to recall information. If a patient finds himself in a similar environment, or in the same mood, preferably positive, or amid a real-life event as a material to be retrieved, then he is more like-

ly to remember.¹³ Even being in the same mood can help the progress of retrieving mental images.¹⁴ Emotion is a strong factor, for example, when a memory or an image is used as a means of calming oneself in cases of restlessness, panic, anxiety, insomnia etc. The assumption is that the exact recollection will find its way back to the conscious remembering, through the same method as before the memory loss.

**YOU SET SAIL
 ACROSS THE SEA
 OF LONG PAST
 THOUGHTS AND
 MEMORIES
 CHILDHOOD'S END,
 YOUR FANTASIES
 MERGE WITH HARSH
 REALITIES.**

— PINK FLOYD^c

To analyse further this assumption, let us pretend that I myself suffer from amnesia. Thus, while being amnesic, I would experience severe uncertainty about myself and about the people and the world surrounding me. I would do exercises that could possibly help me reconnect to my lost memories and I would go through all the frustrating questions the specialists would direct at me about anything from my lost past. If nothing would help, then that would mean a life full of unanswered questions and the feeling that something had been left behind. This would, definitely, affect my future. Going through all of this and fearing for what my future would look like, sleep would be something that I would crave for and look forward to. Experts say a good night's sleep does wonders. What if exactly that would be the key to my remembering?

Prior to the supposed memory loss, I used to use the memory of me boating on the lake as a mechanism to alleviate feelings of panic, anxiety and uneasiness. This mental image used to come to my mind unconsciously, in the verge of falling

asleep. As it can be conceived, my emotions and state were very precise, recognisable and definitely recurring.

After the turmoil of emotions and the dead end around every corner of the mind, comes the time when you just want to leave it all behind and

**WHAT'S WRONG
WITH BEING
NOSTALGIC? IT'S THE
ONLY DISTRACTION
LEFT FOR THOSE
WHO'VE NO FAITH
IN THE FUTURE.**

**– THE GREAT
BEAUTY (FILM)^d**

calm down, to sleep. But your mind races around. The only way to relieve the panic is to think of something reassuring. At this point, I wouldn't be surprised if the memory of a certain boat would pop into my mind.

If it were a movie, then probably,

everything would come back to mind just like that. But that is not always the case. In some cases, even after the discovery of a vanished memory,

THIS IS [HIS] HUMBLE RETURN TO NATURE, LOOKING FOR HARMONY, MINGLING AND REBIRTH. THE PAPER BOAT LETS ITSELF FLOW ALONG; IT GOES LOOKING FOR SOMETHING.

**—ILLUSIMI AKA
SIMONA DIMITRI^e**

there is the possibility that nothing else will arise. The only thing left to do is to go over and over that one memory. Unfortunately, there is not much to it. A boat without a name, on an unfamiliar lake and me sitting in

it. I probably start to search for images of boats, maybe study building techniques and boat types and then, maybe, after folding one small origami boat I get the idea of building my own boat!

After Life, known in Japan as Wonderful Life (ワンダフルライフ Wandafuru Raifu), is a 1998 film by Japanese director Hirokazu Koreeda. The film tells the story of a small social-service-style office, acting as a waystation, where the souls of the recently deceased are processed before entering heaven. These people have a couple of days to single out the happiest memory of their life. The crew of social-workers have then the task to prepare the replica of every person's chosen happy memory in the last remaining days of the week. The recently deceased watch at the end of the week the films of their recreated happiest memories and vanish to the other side taking with them their one single memory.¹⁵

This inspires the recreation of memories as a healing process. By building a boat, not only do I mend to the severed link to my past, but I also create something entirely new. It will

not be the same boat, but the similarity may create a bond between the two “images” and connect the past to the present, and thus the future. The progress of a memory consists in its becoming materialised, as Henri Bergson has said.¹⁶

**IT IS ABOUT TRY-
ING TO CONNECT
THINGS, CONNECT
HISTORIES, CON-
NECT PLACES, CON-
NECT IDEAS AND
SOMEHOW THE VE-
HICLES ARE A SORT
OF INTEGRAL PART
OF THE PROCESS.**

— SIMON STARLING^f

Creativity is known to have kept people alive and sane during harsh conditions. And creativity is also taking risks and telling a story. Having taken the decision of making a boat,

I embark on a journey of self-exploration. It will disclose my vulnerability and show me my fragile self. Like a small origami paper boat transforms into a real boat, I hope to gain something from this.

Once the operation starts, there are two possible outcomes. Either my memory comes back or it doesn't. The restoration can happen while building the boat, with or without any real relation to the task, either because something stimulated the mind or because it was simply time. The flooding back of memories can also magically happen, when I step into the boat on the first launch.

But life is not always magical. In the case of the insisting memory-loss, feelings like anger and disappointment fill the mind. But it does not do to dwell on lost dreams and “what ifs” and forget to live.¹⁷ One must celebrate what one has. With all the work and time dedicated to the project, not only was a boat built, but also a connection to oneself. Looking at oneself creates a memory and having this memory makes it possible to recognise what one knew and what one is. It establishes an access

to the real truth of the soul.¹⁸

Now that the truth has been found, which, in fact, is the present state fortified with the link to the past and freed from the preoccupation about the future, the mind is in peace and open to accept what is to come.

**“THERE ARE THREE MENTAL STATES THAT INTEREST ME”, [...].
 “THESE ARE: ONE, AMNESIA; TWO, EUPHORIA; THREE, ECSTASY.” [...].
 “AMNESIA IS NOT KNOWING WHO ONE IS AND WANTING DESPERATELY TO FIND OUT. EUPHORIA IS NOT KNOWING WHO ONE IS AND NOT CARING. ECSTASY IS KNOWING EXACTLY WHO ONE IS – AND STILL NOT CARING.”**

**– AMANDA,
 “ANOTHER ROADSIDE ATTRACTION” BY
 TOM ROBBINS⁹**

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TOPIC FOUR

A Boat All That's Left

Karla's ships

The lake of Karla is still the biggest lake of Thessaly, a region in central Greece, even after the drying out in 1962. Since the Neolithic period people had settled on the shores of the lake and fished for their living with dugout canoes (boats made of one tree trunk hollowed by burning). Classic Greek texts use the word μονοξύλον (μονόξυλον) (pl: μονοξύλα) - mono- (single) + ξύλον xylon (tree). When the shipwright Konstantinos Vaitzakos came to the village of Kanalia from the islands of Aegean, he brought with him the art of building fisher boats. He built a boat suitable for the calm waters of the lake that could also overleap the reeds. The boats, or the ships, as the

villagers called them, where approximately 5-5,5 m. long and 1 m. wide. The hull was flat but curved up in the bow and the stern. The ship was steered with oars. They were essential for the life of the people living in the proximity of the lake. The ships of Lake Karla are unique in their design and differ from other lake boats around Greece.¹



Ida's ship

A boat needs planning and measuring and building scale models. It means failing countless times and dismissing many plans. The design of the boat depends on the person and on the person's needs. It is, also, important to understand one's limits regarding facilities, materials, equipment and budget.

If the demands are not high and the budget is low, then a simple boat that floats, goes straight with considerable ease and does not keel, is the solution. A boat for lakes with a flat-bottomed hull in the shape of a compass' needle is exactly that.

The flat-bottomed hull allows the boat to be used in shallow bodies of water, such as rivers because it is less likely to ground. The flat hull also makes the boat more stable in calm and protected water.² The pointed bow and stern allow the boat to be steered to both directions, using a double-bladed paddle, and make it able to cut through the water and reeds, compensating for the lack of roundness in the hull. The bow is designed to reduce the resistance of

the hull cutting through water and should be tall enough to prevent water from easily washing over the top of it.

This boat is simple to construct. There is no need to curve the plywood panels and the whole project is ready in a couple of days, depending on the weather conditions. The materials are inexpensive and the whole construction is lightweight and can be transported on the roof of the car.

Her name is Diana. Diana was the goddess of the hunt, the moon, and nature. She was eventually equated with the Greek goddess Artemis. Artemis was worshipped in areas of transition: near the juncture of land and water or where boundaries were obscure. As a goddess of margins and borderlands, she sees to it that boundaries between the wild and civilised are permeable.³



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Notes

1 Ioannis Rouskas, "I epistrophē tis Kárlas (Η επιστροφή της Κάρλας)", pp. 97-106, Athinai, Athens, Greece (2001).

2 "Types of Hulls", <https://www.take-mefishing.org/boating/choose-your-boat/types-of-hulls/>

3 Vernant, Jean Pierre, "Mortals and Immortals: Collected Essays", p. 199, From I. Zeitlin (ed.), Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press (1992).

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Picture

1 <http://www.archaiologia.gr/blog/2017/02/23/υδάτινες-διαδρομές-στη-λίμνη-κάρλα/>

2 Photograph of Diana by Ida-Mina Spyropoulou

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4 Foucault, Michel, "The Hermeneutics of the Subject Lectures at the College de France" (1981 - 82), Arnold I. Davidson (eng. ed.), Editions de Seuil/Gallimard.

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8 "Cognition and Emotion", E. Eich, J. F. Kihlstrom, G. H. Bower, J. P. Forgas, P. M. Niedenthal (eds.), Oxford University Press, New York (2000).

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10 Vernant, Jean Pierre, "Mortals and Immortals: Collected Essays", Froma I. Zeitlin (ed.), Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press (1992).

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Further Reading

On Human Behaviour

- 1 Burroughs, E. R., "Tarzan of the Apes" (1912).
- 2 Stories about Feral Children.
- 3 Language Deprivation Experiments.
- 4 Behaviour during panic attacks.
- 5 Experiments performed by Josef Mengele on twins.
- 6 Wells, H. G., "The Island of Doctor Moreau" (1896).

On Utopia

- 7 More, Thomas, "Utopia" (1516).
- 8 Hilton, James, "Lost Horizon" (1933).
- 9 Wells, H. G., "The Country of the Blind" (1904).
- 10 Orwell, George, "1984" (1949).

On Future, Present and Past

- 11 Bergson, Henri, "The Creative Mind", Philosophical Library, New York (1946).
- 12 Herder, G. S., "The Concept of Future in Bergson and Heidegger. A comparative study.", Indian Philosophical Quarterly (1977).

13 Williams, James, "Gilles Deleuze's Philosophy of Time: A Critical Introduction and Guide" (2011).

On Memory and Amnesia

- 14 Proust, Marcel, "In search of Lost Time v.1. The way by Swann's" (2003).
- 15 Luria, A. R., "The Mind of a Mnemonist" (1987).
- 16 HM, the Man with No Memory.
- 17 Artist Chiharu Shiota's installations.

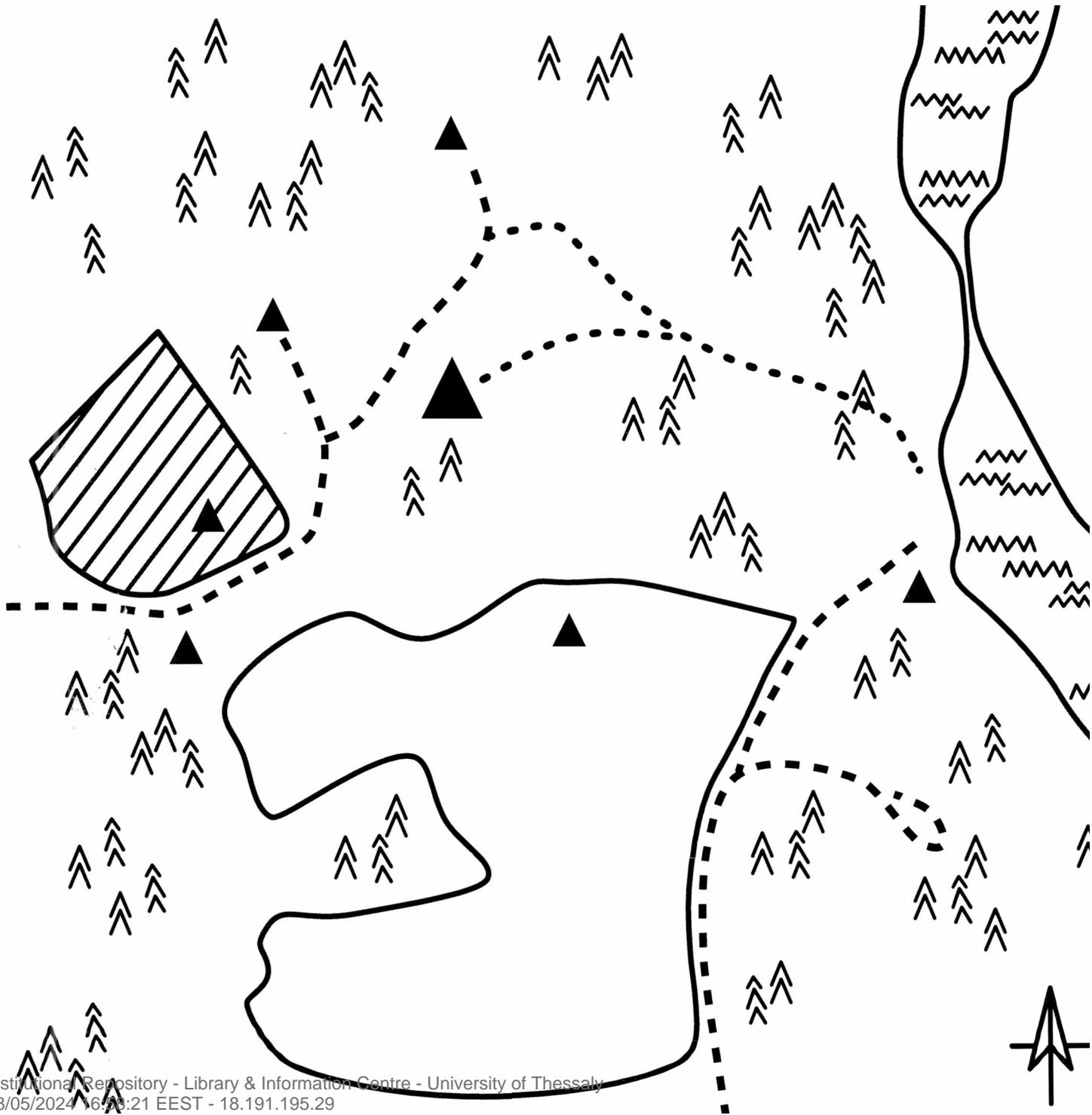
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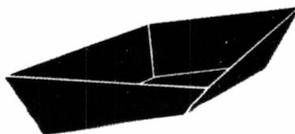


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