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Title: From an exile to an exile: The case of Anafiotika

Anafi is a small and remote island at the edge of the Cyclades, east of Santorini. The village of this island is small and its architecture purely Cycladic. Small white houses with blue windows are built on top of a hill and overlook the Aegean Sea whereas narrow and winding paved alleys create charming labyrinths. The geographic remoteness of this island is the reason why since the Roman times, this island has been largely used as a place of exile. After the Greek Independence, King Otto, the first modern King of Greece appointed stone craftsmen from the Cyclades to work on the refurbishment of his palace in Athens. The first two to arrive, G. Damigos and M. Sigalas, were from Anafi island. Later on, more Anafiotis and other islanders from the Cyclades joined them.

The Anafiot emigrants settled in 'Anafiotika', which is a small neighbourhood located on the north side of the Acropolis hill. They built this settlement themselves and from scratch yet what is remarkable is the location of Anafiotika and its architecture. Anafiotika is on a hill, difficult to find and its architectural language resembles the one of the Cycladic islands. In a sense therefore the first Anafiot settlers 'exiled themselves' by hiding away from the Athenians and (re)created an environment that was familiar to them.

Focusing on this case study and based on theories of Maurice Halbwach and Richard Sennett, I propose to discuss how a sense of 'home' and 'exile' is transmitted through the collective memory and craftsmanship.