

University Seminar #703: Modern Greek Studies

April 7, 2011

Speaker: Margaret Kenna

Topic: “Anthropological theory and practice and the role of serendipity: Forty-five years of research on Anafi”

Presiding Chair: Vangelis Calotychos, Columbia University

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Attendees: Neni Panourgia, Eleana Yalouri, Michael Anthony Fowler, Bianca Isaias, Angela Brisnovali, Nikki Leger

### **Summary of Presentation:**

Kenna’s presentation gave an overview of her work and experiences on the island of Anafi over the past 45 years. The presentation, which included an extensive slide-show of photographs taken by Kenna herself in the course of her research as well as archival images, touched on both her wide-ranging interests as a scholar as well as her personal experiences over the five decades that she has been working as an anthropologist.

Kenna began by discussing the role of serendipity throughout her research over the past 45 years. Originally, her intention was to examine inter-island links on the island of Sikinos, but upon her arrival there, she discovered that there was already an anthropologist doing research there, and this caused divisions among the villagers. Thus, in 1966 she began her fieldwork in Anafi, changing her topic to naming, dowry and inheritance practices, as well as funeral and memorial rituals, and over the years this work took her to Athens, where she also worked with the Anafiot migrant community. In 1988, again by chance, Kenna embarked on a new project, when she was shown a collection of photographs depicting the life of a commune of exiles in Anafi during the Metaxas regime and the Occupation. Subsequently, her work focused on the socio-historical analysis of this political exile community between the late 20s and early 40s. More recently, she has been investigating the “demographic crisis” in Greece and the effect of shrinking families on naming, funerary and memorial practices. And her latest project involves scanning and annotating all the photos that she has taken during her fieldwork, beginning in 1960, for the Benaki Museum Photo Archive in Athens - again owing to the serendipity of learning that the archive’s curator is from an Anafiot family. In the past 5 decades since Kenna began her training as an anthropologist in Britain, Greece has experienced drastic changes, as has the discipline of anthropology itself, and all along serendipity has marked the course of Kenna’s research.

At the time that Kenna began her work in Anafi, there were only two anthropologists, John Campbell and Ernestine Friedl, who had published monographs on Greece, and a small but growing group of anthropologists conducting fieldwork in Europe, such as Kenna's own supervisor Paul Stirling and F.G Bailey at the University of Sussex and their students, and Ronald Frankenberg. Anthropology as a discipline in Greece itself would not take hold until well after the Junta years.

As a young, unmarried student, Kenna began her research in Anafi in the mid-1960s, where she quickly befriended the older generation and, from them, arrived at "the Greek granny's account" of island life and customs. Kenna explained that, in retrospect, she realizes that she failed to make use of certain informants in the early months of her research - those who might be considered "elite", such as the mayor or school-teacher, or those considered to be "outsiders" or "misfits", owing to her own assumptions about how her behavior would be interpreted by villagers - which then had a lasting effect on her relationships with these groups as they became informants later on in her research. Over time, however, she built a large circle of invaluable informants whose everyday lives she shared - in work, in leisure, in celebration and in mourning. Her early work was concerned with revealing underlying structural principles of social life, particularly those having to do with patterns of inheritance and migration - naming practices, inheritance/dowry. This interest continued on in her later work, when she looked at how islanders and return migrants were involved in the development of tourism on Anafi. Kenna described how, at this later point, she was able to subject her earlier work to a reflexive critique - e.g. in regards to the particular demographics of her main informants, and her own positionality as a young woman researcher - and she also discussed how her work was influenced by Meyer Fortes' work on the relationship between the structural and the personal in social life.

In the next part of her presentation, Kenna discussed her work in the 1970s, when she returned to Greece - now in her thirties, a university lecturer, and married - to research the lives of Anafiot migrants and their migrants' association in Athens. Spending time at the Anafiots' *steki*, or base - where the men of the community gathered to catch up on news, to find employment, etc. - as well as in the Anafiotika district in Athens, Kenna was able to start seeing the island from a different perspective, one that took into account the micro-politics among community members, as well as the macro-politics of Europe. She noted that islanders and migrants, in attempting to explain downturns in their personal lives or perceived disadvantages of their island, tended to attribute causality to outside agencies, often blaming government authorities, political parties or foreigners.

In the 1980s, Kenna began a new phase of her research, when she returned to Anafi - this time with a young child - to examine "the connections between islanders, migrants and

the migrants association, in particular the involvement of return migrants, of the migrants association, and of local people in the tourism development of the island”. Towards the end of this fieldwork period, an event occurred which had a profound effect on her subsequent research: she was shown an archive of negatives of photographs depicting the lives of political exiles who had lived in a commune on the island of Anafi during the Metaxas regime and the Occupation. For the first time, she became interested in the exiles not only in terms of how they affected the lives of islanders, but in and of themselves, and her research began to take a social-historical direction, as she investigated the life of the commune. In the course of research, she met with and interviewed surviving exiles and was often overwhelmed with emotion as she looked through the photo archive together with them, many of whom would often recognize themselves in the photographs. Often, former exiles or their family members would hear of her research and would offer their own handwritten memoirs and other personal archives from this period.

The book that resulted from this research opened the doors to another research project: someone who had read and been moved by Kenna’s book on the exiles contacted her and told her about a trove of newspapers that had been handwritten by the commune members. The newspapers had been all but forgotten in the KKE archives, until a flood in the building in 1994 brought them to light. Kenna was given access to the archive, which included the main newspaper of the Anafi commune, *Antifasistas*, as well as newspapers of various regional and political organizations.

In 2006, exactly 40 years after she first set foot on the island, Kenna carried out a short pilot study on the various ways in which the island has changed - through the building of new roads; the proliferation of cars, trucks, and motor-bikes; a revival in agricultural production; and the development of tourism. Kenna emphasized the importance of the new roads - it is precisely because of the new roads that there is now a revival in agriculture, as islanders now have easier access to farmland in other parts of the island. Also, the renovation of scattered *mnemouria* in remote areas of the island can also be attributed, in part, to the greater access made possible by new roads, as well as to islanders’ increasing affluence. Another important change is the tendency of islanders to now see Anafi through tourists’ eyes.

At the end of her presentation, Kenna touched on her two most recent projects: one, investigating the cultural aspects of the demographic problem in Greece - the declining birth-rate and the phenomenon of the “beanpole family” - and two, scanning and annotating all of her fieldwork photos, beginning from her early research in the 1960s through today, to be donated to the Benaki Photographic Archive. Part of this latest

project is to use the photographs to elicit the memories of Anafiots, in order to obtain identifications of people and places.

Kenna concluded by stating that, in the 45 years since she first began research on Anafi, she has seen the island undergo a major transformation - from a depopulating place often perceived as backward, to an island quickly modernizing via tourism, state funding and EU grants. As Anafi has changed over the years, so has Kenna herself, both as an anthropologist and as a person, and her association with the island has been *gematos peripeteies, gematos gnoseis* - “full of adventures, full of discoveries”.

### **Discussion:**

Q: I want to ask about the memorial. Isn't that something that you also have in places like Astypalaia? I think that the majority of the Dodecanese does -in Kalymnos for instance, and Nisiros for instance, there are mnemouria.

A: But this particular idea, that if you have a bone depository next to a chapel, it's somehow of a different category from the *mnemouri* which is entirely for the family, although it's sort of religious in one sense because it might have an icon, I was told that there's some sort of feeling that the ancestors' bones are overseeing the land - and this is why the *mnemouria* are being renovated at the same time that agricultural production is resurgent - and that they're pleased that their lands are being properly used again, new things are happening on the land that's being inherited.

Q: I was wondering whether there was any archaeological work - excavations, etc. - taking place when you started your project, and if not, when did it start and how people related to you studying their present in relation to how they related to the archaeologists studying their past.

A: That's a very interesting question. When I first went to the island, people would say that the shrine of Panagia Kalamiotissa has an ancient temple around it. And I took some photos of the inscriptions there, and then of course later found out that they had all been recorded by Hiller von Gaertringen in 1898. At that time, nobody at all seemed to be interested in the temple or the inscriptions or anything, and the village secretary told me a story. Now I don't know if it's made up or not, but I told him about Colin Renfrew's lecture about the little model figurines, and Kedros as a place where the broken model shards of figurines had been found, but no shard will fit together with any other one; they're just bits of different model figurines. The village secretary said to me, “Oh, I can remember when I was a boy, my father was plowing and me and my cousin were playing.

We found these things like little dollies and we set them up on the wall and threw stones at them until they broke. We used them for target practice.” Now I don’t know whether that was true or not, because the thing about little dolls and *kouklakia*, that’s in the newspapers as well, and of course they’ve got television, they can all go on the web, they can find out what’s happening now, very very quickly, and use the terminology that would make one think, “Ah!” Goulandris used to come to Anafi, and whether the Anafiots discovered or made some of these figurines or not for him to be shown and to buy, I don’t know. But there are remains, and I do have some very nice photos from the 1960s and other periods, of both the Ancient and the Hellenistic stuff on Anafi. Now, because of the road, it’s easier to get to the monastery. The abbot of Prophitis Ilias on Santorini is now in charge of the monastery on Anafi, and all the literature describes it as a *metoxion* of the abbey on Santorini - in other words that it’s a holding, it’s under its authority. He’s been stripping the plaster of the church and the walls. He says that this is to make it easier for the archaeologists, but he also has the key to the gate of the monastery and if the archaeologists don’t have access to the key, they can’t get inside. So there’s all sorts of jurisdictional disputes between the church and the archaeologists. And the islanders are just slightly amused by this, and also by the fact that the abbot of Santorini seems to have leased some of the land to a developer for a pilgrims’ hostel, and the newspapers say things like, “What do pilgrims require a basketball court for?” So the implication is that it’s not really a pilgrim’s hostel at all, it’s going to be a tourist hotel. I don’t know if that really answers your question, and I’ve written a paper on the archaeology and the history of the island. And Angelos Matthaiou is the man on the inscriptions on Anafi. But I know of no records of what’s been found there, except that the Hellenistic statues from the ancient city have been moved to a so-called museum in the village, and everything else that’s near the monastery has been locked up inside one of the parts of the monastery, which the archaeologists have got police crime tape around saying “Do not enter”, “Danger” and so on, and you’re not supposed to go in there. And some of the stuff that was just lying around on the courtyard, beautiful tops of columns and things, have been taken away, and nobody can see any of them.

Q: Thank you for your talk, it was really interesting. I’m an archaeologist, so I think a lot about this. The role of serendipity is very much a part of archaeological research as well. We read your *Social Organization of Exile* this week, and what I found striking was your discussion of the commune and how the government’s attempt to disperse and weaken what they perceived as this dangerous idea, by sending people onto the island, actually was not achieving that goal, because it was allowing people to have solidarity and come together. I was wondering to what extent anyone you might have been talking to also spoke about this as an ideal situation as a workshop or a laboratory for communist ideas, because essentially what they’re doing is taking this theoretical doctrine and showing that it works.

A: Yes. As you know, Elena Mamoulaki, who has worked on Ikaria, has shown that the exiles there influenced the locals to the point where the island now always votes Communist, it always votes KKE. And the personal relationships between the exiles and the islanders - you've got godparenthood, despite being *atheistes*. The only thing that I can remember from back in the 1960s is a story that my landlord told me, about the group of prisoners who were Communists sitting in a cell, and other prisoners weakened the wall and escaped, and they had not been told by the party to escape, so they remained seated in their cell, with the wind blowing through the hole, and the wardens came in and said, "Why didn't you escape as well?" and they said, "Oh, we didn't have orders from the party."

Q: In 1940, when Italy invaded Greece, it was time for the people in Nafplion to escape. There were a thousand members of the Communist party there, along with a few Trotskyites and Archaeo-Marxists, as there were on Anafi, who did not leave. They did not leave, precisely because they didn't know. The Trotskyites left, the Archaeo-Marxists left, but the members of the party stayed there because they didn't know what to do.

A: There's a very famous Victorian painting called *Faithful Unto Death*, of the centurion at Pompei, standing there with all the flaming stuff coming down on top of his head, and you'd think that anybody sensible would realize that nobody's going to give him the order that he can leave his post. It's terribly British - it's a British view of the Romans. Anyway, that's an interesting question. What I thought you were going to ask when you said you're an archaeologist was more about the islanders' relationship with the archaeological sites, and how much they conceal or reveal to other people. We know in other parts of Greece, when they're digging the foundations of a house and they find something, they'll cart the stone to the outskirts of town and drop it, and you won't know what its provenance is. Ken Sheedy, who's a numismatist, came to Anafi in 1987, 1988 and he said that where they dig up new cisterns, you can see this proto-geometric pottery on the top of the pile, so it's obviously the deepest, but all the sources say that the village on Anafi only dates from medieval times, so that can't be right. And he's gone walking around the island, and he says that there are at least two or three other places where there have been settlements, where he's found pottery fragments all over the place. So somebody will make their name excavating in Anafi, and my hope is that there's going to be a place as good as Akrotiri on Anafi.

Q: I was struck by the numbers - the demographics for the last few years were pretty steady, around 270, but at the same time, you say there's so much building going on, and there's also cultivation and agriculture, so I'm wondering how economic migrants figure into all this in the last few years.

A: Most of the migrants who've got property on Anafi now register themselves there to vote, because obviously they've got an interest in controlling the village council or being on the village council.

Q: I mean, foreigners as well. Are their foreign migrants on Anafi? Albanians, Pakistanis.

A: Oh yes. There's a very interesting man called Ilias Nokas, who's a sort of water specialist.

Q: Oh I know him, very well. I live in Syros. He's a friend, we trek together.

A: Oh, *xairetismata polla*. You can tell him that I mentioned his name. He's an amateur photographer of a very very high standard, and he does albums, as they call them in Greece - these beautiful photographic books - and he's done one of Anafi. Interestingly, he visits the places in winter so he gets pictures of snow in Syros, and Anafi in the winter, and in one of these pictures is a man walking towards the photographer in a village street, and everyone says, "*Alvanos einai! Den einai ntopios!*" There are Albanians. I've seen Filipinos doing white-washing before Easter; lots of workers were living in the rooms where the tourists are going to live in the summer, while the renovation or the building is being done during the winter. That's again very interesting in terms of gender analysis - the men and the migrants are there in the winter, building or renovating, and the women are doing all the work in the rooms to rent in the summer, although in the summer the men are working and running the restaurants, or being administrators in some of these rooms, like the one with the jacuzzi, but not actually making beds or anything. I haven't done enough work on how Anafi is working in that sense as a tourist enterprise, but I have noticed this way in which they see their own village very differently from the way they used to see it. They actually look at landscape and scenery and talk about the sunset, you know that kind of thing, which they never did before, or at least they didn't speak about it.

Q: I actually have 3 questions. The first one is, have you taken a photograph, now, of that first street that you showed us?

A: I've taken a photograph of the same place.

Q: What does it look like?

A: It more or less looks the same, except that the houses have been smartened up and they're white and blue instead of just white. Also, the interesting thing to note is that,

when I was a poor student, I was using black and white film which also makes those things look older, and occasionally I used color, which was supposed to be for special occasions, because it was more expensive to develop and more expensive to get copies made then, and I was conscious of the budget. And the islanders wanted color, and I only had one camera, so I had a color photograph of people in their best clothes on Sunday, because they'd ask me to, and then I was taken out to see the harvesting of something, so that was in color. So it was meant to be that I saved the black and white for everyday, I don't know why I thought that was appropriate, and color was for special occasions, but it just so happened that I had black and white film in my camera in the most important moment of the islanders' year, which was the festival of Panagia Kalamiotissa in September 1966, so all my photographs from the most important part of the year - why I didn't rip the black and white film out and put a color in, I don't know. Maybe it was the Protestant ethic: "You've got to use the black and white film first." And the originals are tiny little prints, some of them with deckle edging, and all going brown because they were so badly produced, and what's also interesting about scanning this stuff to give to the Benaki - scanning the negatives as well as the prints - is that there's more detail in the negatives. One picture of people killing animals underneath a tree, which is more or less black under the tree, in the negative I can see who's there and I can see the corpses of the animals being skinned. The other thing is, the pictures that I thought were important at the festival - like the photo of the iconic procession, when the icon passed me and I took the photograph, I wasn't particularly interested in that because it showed the back of the icon. But when I looked at the picture to scan it, in the distance, having run around to the front of the procession is somebody taking a photo of the front of the icon. I would have sworn that my camera was the only one at that event. Clearly in the background there's somebody in there taking a photograph position, like this. So if I hadn't done that scanning, I wouldn't have been able to see those details.

Q: My second question - what sort of agriculture has been revived?

A: They get some grants for grain, I think, and this explains why there were 4.5 more times barley grown on the island according to the statistics in the 80s than in the 60s, which is impossible.

Q: Barley?

A: Yes, for beer. They sold it to the Fix factory for beer. Also, there were grants for shepherds to stay and have flocks of sheep and goats. But that's been low-level stuff. There aren't many people involved in that kind of thing. Mostly people are growing their own vegetables. They tend not to be growing grain. They will have olive trees, and



they're doing lots more irrigation, and they can take what in Britain are called Rotovators, which are like little diggers that you can do the ground with.

Q: So it's all for subsistence?

A: It's what a friend of mine calls hobby farming. It's mostly retired people who like to have something fresh to eat or to pickle and take to Athens or to send to their grandchildren. And there used to be this trade in baskets to and fro, with the reversible cloth on the top, and they'd have an address in Piraeus or somewhere on one side and an address in Anafi on the other and it got so faded that you couldn't read it, but everybody knew whose basket it was.

Q: And the last question is, when did you first hear about the exiles? And did you ever hear about the exiles of 1947?

I heard about the exiles even before I got to Anafi, because this *irinodikis* said, "When I go to Anafi, I always stay in this nice room below a cafe. It's got a lovely view, it's got its own courtyard, it's got its own locking door so you'll be fine. You wouldn't have to be living with a family with kids and be overseen by anybody, you'd be independent, so that's much better for you. The only problem is the cafe owner, who's terribly garrulous, because he longs to have somebody to talk to, and he was a political exile."

Q: The man from Kozani?

A: Yes, that's why he was there! And of course, when I eventually got to Anafi, I had read *Exiles in the Aegean* by Bert Birtles, which has since been translated into Greek. There's something called *Children of Thetis* by Kininmonth, that also mentions Anafi. I put those in the historical chapter of my thesis, to talk about the background to it, but as I said, I focused on the effects of the exiles on the islanders rather than on the exiles themselves. That's why I now kick myself that I didn't listen to this man telling me all his reminiscences. He was there during the second phase, the civil war phase, and he told me that his elder daughter, rather like the description of the daughter of Electra Apostolou, used to sit in the crook of somebody's walking stick and be swung to and fro. And a group called Chroes from Crete have now made a CD called *Electra, A Study in Light*. They went to Anafi with that name, the daughter of Electra, and they brought into it Electra Apostolou, and Electra of Sophocles, and Florence the daughter of William Crispo, who was the Venetian ruler of Anafi, and so on and so on. A very very interesting piece of work, I wish I could've been there.

Q: It's kind of related to your last question. I was really interested in the role of photographs in remembering that particular period, those events and the people. I'm not exactly sure what my question might be, but I'm just fascinated by the role of photographs from this period, just because so much of your slideshow was about this rich archive of your own work, and the work that you're doing now at the Benaki, creating this archive of photographs, and then you said that you really started your research because of this trove of photographs. So I'm just curious if you could talk a little bit about any thoughts you might have on the relationship between the material remains, both on the island, what those mean for the people on the island, those kinds of things, mostly the photographs. I'm curious, you said that the people in exile had built their own furniture, clearly they were making things, so are there any other material remains.

A: In my landlord's house, they've still got a couple of those little tiny stools.

Q: Do people on the island think about their relationship to these objects? Did you find something interesting about that, in the way they related to these objects?

A: If I could just go back to the photographs, when I first went there, nobody except maybe the doctor or schoolteacher had a camera, and they certainly didn't use it to take photographs of what was happening on the island. So I was a resource for the island in that respect, and I soon found out that taking photographs was not for me, for my research, or it was for me and my research, but the trade-off was taking pictures which I would then give to them. I had to persuade them that it wasn't just them in their Sunday best - "Oh, now we'll pose with this. Now we'll pose with that." More and more, how many more people have got to have six copies of this picture, ten copies of this picture... I said, "I really want natural photos of you doing the things that you do everyday", and then I suppose I tried to argue that they might be a resource for the future, but really it was self-interested on my part. That's what I thought would illustrate my thesis. A lot of them had a glass bowl in the center of the table in which photographs were put, almost like sweetmeats, layers and layers of photographs, and they would pull them out and show them, some old, some new, and some had them arranged. In one house, all the living were on the sideboard and all the dead were somewhere else, like in a family shrine. In some houses you had these very stilted photographs of senior grandparents, because in those days, the only way to have your photograph taken was to be absolutely still, so they looked very hieratic and posed and so on. It's very hard to say quite how they saw those photographs. They maybe looked at them for a family resemblance, they would look at them for clothes, they would look at them for change - "that spot on the island is different, those trees are burned down". Now to go to the physical remains: because there has been no exile tourism on the island as there has been in other places, they haven't preserved any traces of the exiles. There was still the mystery of where the

exhumed bones of the exiles who died on the island have been placed. Whether one of the *mnemouri* is actually the exile *mnemouri* - that would be fascinating to find out. There's so much interest now, and so much time has gone by since the 1960s, that it's an interesting topic rather than a problematic topic. Though even the man who's the son of my landlord who actually owns the copyright and actually owns physically the negatives now, said he didn't mind me using these in academic publications, he didn't mind them being on the web, but somebody on the island would like to use some of them as postcards, and he said, "I don't mind them being used as postcards, as long as they're postcards of parts of the island, or where you can't identify the people, because it might be a great shock for some people to realize that one of their ancestors was a political exile". I'm thinking, "1938? Is anyone going to be totally destroyed?" but the fact that the man next to the saxophonist was somebody's great-grandfather... But that's what he says. Of course, anyone can take what they want off the web, if they wanted to.

Q: And also, how many people would not know that one of their ancestors had been an exile, and if they didn't know that, how could they recognize it?

A: That was his position. His relationship to these photographs, it's not exactly dog-in-a-manger, but I'm trying to persuade him to give them to the Benaki photo archive too, because they need conservation. They've been stuck in the same cardboard box since I was shown them in July 1988. He took them to Athens when I said I've got a grant of several thousand pounds to have them copied, and he had them all copied, and he said "You can have the copies", but he's kept the negatives, and they've not been conserved in any way.

Q: So what kind of recording does the Benaki museum do concerning these photos? What are they going to do with them, or is it just going to make the big collection of the Benaki museum that is keeping all Greek heritage...?

A: They're going to keep all my own photographs. Now, he could suddenly go bananas and break all the negatives, couldn't he, or he could die, or there could be a flood in his house, and they could all be destroyed. I'm scanning all of those in high resolution and I'm putting them in the Benaki photo archive, but obviously he is the owner and nobody can use them without contacting him, but at least they'll be there.

Q: They should be given to the exile museum.

A: I know, they want them.

Q: And you know, both the Benaki museum and ELIA, they just have these huge collections with insufficient background information, and it would be such a great project...

A: I've annotated all my own ones, which is why it's taking such a long time to get through them, and I've annotated nearly all of the exile ones. If you go on the web, you'll see there are lines and lines and lines of text on each particular picture.

Q: I once worked on some photographs in the Benaki, and they had absolutely no idea where they were, who was on there. There was a photograph of people beating on a tree, and they had a made-up caption saying this was a pistachio tree. And I said that is not a pistachio tree. I mean, look at it - it's not a pistachio tree. It looks like an almond tree to me. And there was a woman who said, "Well, we had almond trees in Nea Makri and I can tell you this is not an almond tree." What kind of an archive are you? You don't know when the photograph was taken - we're telling you - you don't know what is being depicted, and you don't care.

A: That's why I'm annotating as carefully as possible, and I'm keeping all my own copies.

Q: How come this person has ownership of the collection?

A: Well, he physically has them, because his father rescued them from the house where the exile commune was in 1950-something, so he'd had them for over 30 years.

Q: I'm particularly interested in this question because of Elena's research in Ikaria and the role that photographs play there. There's that amazing archive and Christos takes such good care of it, and not just that - the photographs actually play a role, and they bring people together and play a role in processes of remembering and memorialization and commemorating. It's not just something that you can look at, but it's something that's passed around and studied and talked about and people convene over the photographs. And so I'm curious - it sounds like these photographs are pretty much forgotten. It's just a box in someone's house.

A: The negatives, he knows he has them. The books - there's a copy in the village school, there's one in the village office, you can buy them in Eleftheroudakis. But the only ones the islanders seem to be interested in are the ones that are of island landscapes - the harbor, the village, with no people in them - and one which shows an island wedding, (Is that in November? With the children standing around and everybody's in overcoats, it looks to be a cold day, and they can recognize who is who in that picture), and one which

is of a funeral, very very blurred, in a way just like mine with the coffin and so on. They don't seem to be interested in the others - "They've nothing to do with us".

Q: We read your work in the context of a class on islands, which I'm interested in. This is kind of an odd observation, but having not been to Anafi, the closest I've been is Folegandros, I think, which is probably a little larger, but it reminds me of that town above, with the very small port. They had exiles from the civil war, for sure, because I remember walking down this very rocky landscape to go to the beach, and I wanted to ask you about the beach, two things. The first is, thinking back to the 1960s, whether people in town went to the beach or went swimming, because when I was in Folegandros, my first memory was that the person I was staying with had never been in the water, ever, and as a result I was so astounded by that, that I started asking people, older people in the village, if they had ever been to the water, and of course they'd say no. That's the first observation.

A: Except to wash their sheep, before they have their fleece sheared.

Q: So they didn't go to the beach, they didn't go to swim. The other thing that was very strange for me was going down these trails and finding these caves, which very often had the names of people who had lived there at that time. It was very rocky landscape, and we were going to the beach at the time, and for me it was very strange, because my readings back then - of civil war or leftist poetry and then later civil war narratives of people who had fought - were very much about the deprivation, not having water, not going to water, never going near the sea, and I just remember thinking how ironic it was that they found themselves exiled and abandoned on these islands, surrounded by the water. It was very strange. Both of these realizations came to me side by side in Folegrandros, and it was very strange to hear people that didn't go to the sea, and people for whom water seemed to be such a strong symbol, or had become a symbol, I guess, in thinking about revolution.

A: One of things in the exiles' memoirs, it talks about the exiles digging for water, to irrigate the rented land. In 1956, there was an earthquake on Santorini, as you know, and several things happened on Anafi. Nobody was killed, but one of the springs was blocked up, and the three farmers who had land nearby would not cooperate to clear it, in case one of them would benefit more from the clearing than the others. So, that was the sort of view - when I saw Jean de Florette and Manon des Sources, I thought "Anafi!" The mean-spirited nastiness that would damn somebody else just to score a point, I saw that happening all the time.