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Haunt of Albanian Migrants

# "These days are ours, too"

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Monday, December 15, 2008

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An updated short presentation of the recent riots in Athens and Thessaloniki through the eyes of some proletarian participants

*(The following text was distributed at the student picket outside the police headquarters today by people from Athens' Haunt of Albanian Migrants. I wanted to translate and upload it here because it shows something very important : that ties of solidarity are being formed and strengthened across different sectors of the Greek society - a wonderful thing !)*

### **These days are ours, too**

Following the assassination of Alexis Grigoropoulos we have been living in an unprecedented condition of turmoil, an outflow of rage that doesn't seem to end. Leading this uprising, it seems, are the students - who with an inexhaustible passion and hearty spontaneity have reversed the whole situation. You cannot stop something you don't control, something that is organised spontaneously and under terms you do not comprehend. This is the beauty of the uprising. The high school students are making history and leave it to the others to write it up and to classify it ideologically. The streets, the incentive, the passion belongs to them.

In the framework of this wider mobilisation, with the student demonstrations being its steam-engine, there is a mass participation of the second generation of migrants and many refugees also. The refugees come to the streets in small numbers, with limited organisation, with the spontaneity and impetus describing their mobilisation. Right now, they are the most militant part of the foreigners living in Greece. Either way, they have very little to lose.

The children of migrants mobilise en masse and dynamically, primarily through high school and university actions as well as through the organisations of the left and the far left. They are the most integrated part of the migrant community, the most courageous. They are unlike their parents, who came with their head bowed, as if they were begging for a loaf of bread. They are a part of the Greek society, since they've lived in no other. They do not beg for

## "These days are ours, too"

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something, they demand to be equal with their Greek classmates. Equal in rights, on the streets, in dreaming.

For us, the politically organised migrants, this is a second french November of 2005. We never had any illusions that when the peoples' rage overflowed we would be able to direct it in any way. Despite the struggles we have taken on during all these years we never managed to achieve such a mass response like this one. Now is time for the street to talk : The deafening scream heard is for the 18 years of violence, repression, exploitation and humiliation. These days are ours, too.

These days are for the hundreds of migrants and refugees who were murdered at the borders, in police stations, workplaces. They are for those murdered by cops or "concerned citizens." They are for those murdered for daring to cross the border, working to death, for not bowing their head, or for nothing. They are for Gramos Palusi, Luan Bertelina, Edison Yahai, Tony Onuoha, Abdurahim Edriz, Modaser Mohamed Ashtraf and so many others that we haven't forgotten.

These days are for the everyday police violence that remains unpunished and unanswered. They are for the humiliations at the border and at the migrant detention centres, which continue to date. They are for the crying injustice of the Greek courts, the migrants and refugees unjustly in prison, the justice we are denied. Even now, in the days and nights of the uprising, the migrants pay a heavy toll - what with the attacks of far-righters and cops, with deportations and imprisonment sentences that the courts hand out with Christian love to us infidels.

These days are for the exploitation continuing unabatedly for 18 years now. They are for the struggles that are not forgotten : in the downs of Volos, the olympic works, the town of Amaliada. They are for the toil and the blood of our parents, for informal labour, for the end-less shifts. They are for the deposits and the adhesive stamps, the welfare contributions we paid and will never have recognised. It is for the papers we will be chasing for the rest of our lives like a lottery ticket.

These days are for the price we have to pay simply in order to exist, to breathe. They are for all those times when we crunched our teeth, for the insults we took, the defeats we were charged with. They are for all the times when we didn't react even when having all the reasons in the world to do so. They are for all the times when we did react and we were alone because our deaths and our rage did not fit pre-existing shapes, didn't bring votes in, didn't sell in the prime-time news.

These days belong to all the marginalised, the excluded, the people with the difficult names and the unknown stories. They belong to all those who die every day in the Aegean sea and Evros river, to all those murdered at the border or at a central Athens street ; they belong to the Roma in Zefyri, to the drug addicts in Eksarhia. These days belong to the kids of Mesol-logiou street, to the unintegrated, the uncontrollable students. Thanks to Alexis, these days belong to us all.

**18 years of silent rage are too many.  
To the streets, for solidarity and dignity !**

**We haven't forgotten, we won't forget - these days are yours too**

**Luan, Tony, Mohamed, Alexis...**

*Haunt of Albanian Migrants*

<http://www.steki-am.blogspot.com>