

SYNOPSIS:

## « THE CITY OF ATHENS »

by

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Although a member of the European Community for the last thirty years, Greece has never really taken advantage of this position.

The Greek political system failed in many ways to convince its citizens that it can handle contemporary social issues like poverty, uncontrolled immigration and security. Above all, it failed to support any initiative aiming at modern economical development.

**All these are reflected at their peak in Greece's capital, Athens.**

Large parts of the city were turned into ghettos, because of the permanent mistreatment of a huge volume of immigrants and the abasement of their human rights.

This situation urged the domestic criminals to deploy their illegal activities and eventually Athens found itself host to a big subsystem with its own rules, laws and even commerce.

The education system has been chaotic for the past 40 years and is extremely inadequate, while the main concern of Ministry of Education is to prepare students for Greek or foreign universities and not to offer them a strong, wide and complete education.

The traditional financial recourses like agriculture and tourism disappeared under the absence of management design and because of the continuous exploitation of the domestic and European Union resources.

Criminality has increased because of the inefficiency of the relevant institutions and authorities, and also because of the totally unequal distribution of wealth which caused extreme anger and negligence of the principals elements of a healthy community.

Corruption has also appeared at every social and political level, as many Greeks came to realize that the only way to make a decent living was to bypass the established constitutional operating system and take control of the various procedures of everyday life.

Murders for political or economical reasons and heavy drug usage in the middle of the streets, assaults, riots, robberies, racism, nationalism, spatial asphyxia and stress, are the elements that compose the sovereign status of Athens where once stood the romantic Athenian neighborhood.

And all this at a period which is already charged with contemporary problematic issues such as globalization, unemployment and unorthodox consumerism.

From many points of view, Athens seems to move backwards.

The era of the 80's, when modernization of the various parts of upcoming European development was just beginning to take shape, is now Athens's present. The once "1st European Capital of Culture" and host city of the 2004 Olympic Games, seems to sink deeper and deeper into misery, mediocrity, lack of meritocracy and political inability.

This is a long and partially unfinished photographic project, which began two years ago and it is dedicated to Athens's sociological and natural environment.

This photographic essay aims to produce questions instead of answers, at the time of a big effort of transition of a typical Balkan metropolis into a promising member of the European community.