

# Collective Identity and Empowerment in the December 2008 Protests in Greece: A Socio-psychological Approach

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## **Abstract**

*The shooting of fifteen-year-old pupil Alexis Grigoropoulos by a policeman, on December the 6th in 2008, marked the onset of a protest cycle in Greece. Social psychology treats such contentious events as the results of the strategies adopted by minority groups in the process of social change, rather than as violent and irrational riots. Protests are seen as collective actions that contribute in collective identification of social activists, leading to a sense of in-group solidarity and empowerment. The current study, based on the discursive analysis of interviews taken by fifteen, mainly young, participants in those protests, highlights the ways participants account for those protests by including the vast majority of the population in the category of 'protestors', by positioning the police and authorities as the outgroups and heavily questioning their legitimacy and finally by acknowledging a feeling of empowerment through the process of collective identification.*