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Obituary

Andreas Kloke (1953-2025)

- Features - In Memoriam - Obituaries and appreciations -

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Our comrade Andreas Klocke, with whom we were active in what was then the only group in the Greek section of the Fourth International, died at the beginning of October, greatly weakened by a very long illness following a complex operation. In recent years, as far as his strength allowed, Andreas continued to be involved in observing and analysing what could advance a revolutionary crisis.

Born in Cologne, he was active in the GIM, at that time the German section of the Fourth International, then, having moved to Greece in 1988 where he taught German, he joined OKDE-Spartakos, where he was an active member, leading debates and serving on the editorial board of the journal. In addition to numerous articles, he also wrote books, either translating German texts into Greek or publishing a book (in Greek) in 2015, "Political Revolution, Nationalism, Socialism". This book was presented at the Nea Smyrni Workers' Club (Ergatiki Lescki) by comrades Christos Kefalis, Tassos Anastasiadis, and Manos Skoufoglou, when Andreas was already weakened by illness. A resident of a suburb created by and for Greek refugees from Asia Minor after 1922, Andreas was active there, notably as a local founding member of Antarsya and of Poli Anapoda ("The City Upside Down"), a municipal intervention group of the radical and revolutionary left.

Andreas' illness and death are a great loss to his comrades, for the quality of his analyses, but above all for his open approach to discussion among revolutionaries. Admittedly, he disagreed with the majority view within the Fourth International on the construction of broad parties. He wanted to persuade us that this path was a mistake, lining up examples of failures, accompanied by a small smile that was anything but ironic, because even if the discussions could sometimes be tough, for Andreas one thing was certain: these disagreements were part of the discussions between revolutionaries, and he never claimed that they pitted "true revolutionaries" against "reformists", contrary to the tradition of leftist sectarianism that unfortunately continues to rage in Greece. His insistence on his disagreement with the construction of broad parties was explained very concretely by his fear that the sections of the Fourth International engaging in this path would dilute and weaken themselves or lose their revolutionary character.

But most importantly, as was recalled during the tribute paid at his funeral, attended by his former comrades and friends, including several activists from the two groups that make up the current Greek section, Fourth International Programmatic Tendency and OKDE Spartakos, Andreas agreed with the FI line on most of the key issues of the day. This often happened at the end of discussions where his point of view evolved as he took into account the reality on the ground: for example, on the situation in the former Yugoslavia (in contrast to the pro-Serbian campism of the Greek left), on the importance of developing Die Linke and so on. This pragmatism, which was the opposite of rigid and often anachronistic conceptions (one might think of the current impressive ignorance of the anti-imperialist resistance of the Ukrainian people by almost the entire Greek left), was a quality that made our comrade valuable and highly esteemed. And that is what we wanted to honour by presenting the salute of the Fourth International at his funeral.

And of course, we will always remember his kindness and humour, qualities that are invaluable for a revolutionary! All our thoughts go out to his partner, Merry, and his son Manolis.

Translated by International Viewpoint

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