

Riot Dogs



Riot dogs

A riot dog is a stray dog that accompanies street protesters. The term originated during the 2008 Greek riots when a number of stray dogs remained among the protesters even when violent rioting broke out. A few riot dogs have acquired a large following of fans around the world such as the Greek Loukanikos and Negro Matapacos in Chile.

In Greece

LOUKANIKOS

Loukanikos (Λουκάνικος; the sausage loukaniko) or more commonly Louk (Λουκ), sometimes confused by the media for Kanellos, was present at nearly every protest in Athens up until 2012. This stray has ostensibly become the symbol of Greek protests against the IMF- and ECB-prompted austerity measures. There was uncertainty about the claim that Loukanikos and Thodoris may, in fact, be the same dog however this was later confirmed false after Loukanikos died.

In September 2011, on the occasion of a striking policemen's union marching in the centre of Athens, Loukanikos, according to eyewitnesses, was "initially confused" between two opposite sides both of uniformed policemen but, when the riot police contingent attacked their striking colleagues, the dog sided with "those who were being attacked."

Loukanikos' health was "severely burdened" by the inhaling of tear gas and other chemicals during the many riots in which he participated but lived until approximately ten years of age, dying peacefully in 2014 at the home of a person who cared for him.



Loukanikos



Loukanikos

KANELLOS

Kanellos (Greek: Κανέλλος; cinnamon), a distinct blond, male, mixed-breed canine, was arguably the first incarnation of the Greek Riot Dog. His maiden appearance was in photographs taken at a general assembly of students in the occupied National Technical University of Athens. Kanellos became famous in the 2008 Greek riots, when Greek photographers and cameramen started to notice a dog that kept appearing in their footage. The stray seemed to always walk amongst and side with the protesters.

According to reports by witnesses, Kanellos, in his final years, suffered from arthritis, which motivated a group of college students to collect money and purchase him a dog's wheelchair. This allowed him to live indoors, among the students, until he died.

Thodoris



Kanellos

THODORIS

Theodoris (Θοδωρίς) is a Kanellos look-alike, believed to be one of Kanellos' pups. Thodoris is a light golden-colored, mixed breed dog, who, despite being a stray, has seemingly been provided with all the necessary medical shots, as evidenced by his blue collar.

In Chile

NEGRO MATAPACOS

In Chile, during the 2011–2013 Chilean student protests, a stray dog accompanied student protestors. Protesters named him “Negro Matapacos” (from Spanish matar, to kill, and paco, which is Chilean slang for “policeman”; his full nickname therefore translates to “Black Cop-killer”), or refer to him simply as “El Negro”. Matapacos died on 26 August 2017 of old age with a veterinarian and other people by his side.



Negro Matapacos



A graffito of Negro Matapacos at La Cisterna

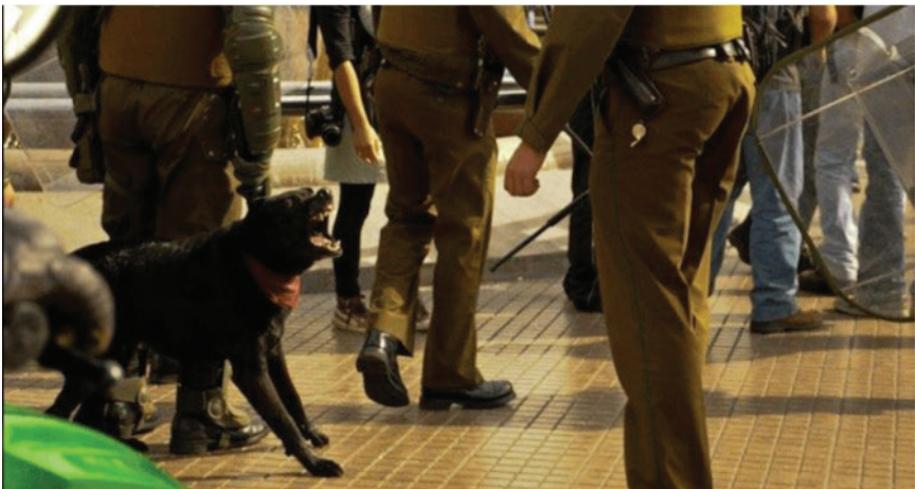
During the 2019 Chilean protests, the image of Negro Matapacos acquired notoriety again, and protesters drew inspiration from him during street demonstrations, appearing on various posters, stickers, murals and papier-mâché sculptures. Some people also requested that a statue of the dog be installed in a public place.

Negro Matapacos was a riot dog that participated in the 2011–2013 Chilean student protests in Santiago, Chile. He later became a symbol in the 2019–2020 Chilean protests as a sort of resistance to police brutality and to represent the fight for dignity. He has had graffiti and statues made in his honor throughout the country and even outside of Chile, such as in the Decolonize This Place subway protests in New York City in 2019. He was notable for his black fur and the red handkerchief that was tied around his neck, although he also had a blue and a white handkerchief that his caregiver also put on him.

The dog gained fame among the university circles of Santiago, mainly in the universities of Santiago (Usach), Metropolitan of Technology (UTEM) and Central (Ucen). During the 2011 student protests Negro Matapacos became known for participating in the street marches and attacking members of Carabineros de Chile, which garnered the sympathies of the Chilean protesters.

Although Negro Matapacos was considered a stray dog, due to its presence in different university headquarters and streets of Santiago, he was under the care of María Campos, who adopted him in 2009 and who fed him, had a bed for him in her residence, tied his handkerchiefs around his neck, and blessed him before he went out. During his participation in street demonstrations, several media outlets also called him the “Chilean Loukanikos”, due to his similarities with the dog that became famous during the protests in Greece between 2010 and 2012.

Negro Matapacos died on 26 August 2017, attended by veterinary personnel and caregivers. Various sources mention that at the time of his death he had left descendants of 32 puppies with 6 different dogs.



Negro Matapacos

In December 2013 the documentary Matapaco was released, made by Víctor Ramírez, Carolina García, Nayareth Nain, Francisco Millán and Sergio Medel of EnMarcha Films, and which won the Best Documentary award at the Santo Tomás Festival in Viña del Mar.

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Tributes have also been made outside of Chile, such as in Japan on 14 November 2019, where the statue of Hachikō outside Shibuya station in Tokyo was adorned with a red handkerchief, similar to that worn by Negro Matapacos. On 18 November 2019, the statue of Balto at Central Park in New York City was adorned in the same way. He was also represented in Wellington, New Zealand, when Anarchists took a red bandana and placed it on the neck of a statue of Fritz, a dog owned by an early European settler to the city.

During the mass evasions that took place on 1 November of the same year in the New York City Subway in protest of the police's repression of a fare evader, many stickers with the image of Negro Matapacos jumping a turnstile appeared in New York City Subway stations.



Remembering Rucio Capucha: The Chilean “Riot Dog” Who Stood With Protesters



Rucio Capucha. Photo by Working Class History

Among the most iconic figures in protests against authority and economic strife are dogs, the beloved four-legged participants. The story of Rucio Capucha, a stray dog who became an international symbol of resistance during the 2019 protests in Chile has resurfaced online, capturing hearts once again.

He was one of several canines worldwide known as “riot dogs,” animals that have famously joined public demonstrations. Rucio was a regular and fearless presence at the front lines, often photographed facing off against police in riot gear and barking at armored vehicles attempting to disperse crowds.



On November 16, 2019, he was deliberately targeted and injured by a police water cannon, sustaining a lung contusion. After the incident, the stray dog was treated by veterinary students and was later adopted into a family, where he lived peacefully until his passing in 2023. His legacy continues to inspire discussions about social movements and the unexpected figures, both human and animal, that define them



Forget Greece's "Riot Dog." Turkish protesters have a whole pack.



[reddit.com/r/socialism/comments/1fh5b7/forget_greeces_riot_dog_turkish_protesters_have_a/](https://www.reddit.com/r/socialism/comments/1fh5b7/forget_greeces_riot_dog_turkish_protesters_have_a/)



Negro Matapacos

