

Manifesto by Patras Bwansi alias Bino Byansi Byakuleka

We are born free!

This is my ideological understanding of the true essence of being human. Unfortunately only a minority of people acknowledges this fact in the capitalistic world today, while another minority hold the power. As a result the majority of people are being dehumanized, because human beings are not seen as equal by all. These facts must be acknowledged by all individuals, within groups and societies for the sake of all humanity. But to achieve that we must deal first with FEAR, because FEAR is a force which governs most human beings.

FEAR

It comes from four directions - East, West, North and South. And FEAR has produced racism. For me FEAR is the virus and racism is the symptom of the ailing body. Further symptoms are selfishness with regard to personal or social gains, hatred of those who lack them, the fostering of a power gap, subsequent supremacy, and corruption. But FEAR is the force in the centre of the whole equation, and when it collides with the outside conditions and if there is no one to keep people calm, then all these symptoms burst open and develop a very negative energy. This energy is instrumentalised by the imperial forces. People are born with a good heart, but anxiety and external pressure make them unsure of themselves and they find themselves to be racist.

All of those symptoms have produced racial discrimination in the world today - hatred between black, coloured and white people, but also as a consequence between women and men, who have turned against each other because of gender segregation, parents against their own children, brothers against sisters, society against society, rich against the poor. FEAR - it has pushed the world politically, economically, socially and culturally into chaos.

Since the very first encounter between whites and blacks, whites thought that they are more powerful than blacks or coloured people on this planet. To prove this they wage wars, and they inspire wars in places they rule. Since the first encounter the idea of divide and rule has been institutionalized in every colonised society at all levels, thereby inciting internal and external political, economical, social and cultural wars. Since the first encounter and up to today the so-called developed world has felt itself superior to the developing world. However, this is not a natural but a constructed development, because it is rooted in the evolution of imperialism as an ideological concept, which in turn is rooted in the systematic dehumanisation of other humans - the black and coloured people, the refugees, women, children, LGBTIQ people, disabled and homeless, students, workers, jobless, prisoners and prostitutes - in short all the powerless people suffer most from the results of FEAR. As a consequence the majority of the population have to face daily oppression, enslavement, and discrimination.

Now the question is: How to deal with FEAR?

"The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear." Nelson Mandela

I believe that we are human beings, who are born free. Therefore we must free ourselves again. It is possible to overcome FEAR and liberate ourselves from this bondage if each and every one tries to reflect on his or her personality within and in relation to the outside world, no matter what kind of gender, race, nationality, religion, education, and status they have. For me FEAR creates a

situation that can only be countered by the analyzing and realizing of the facts and secondly by educating oneself. Therefore for the disadvantaged people there is a big need to join hands and work together. That is why I say in my logo: "my right is your right!" My right to walk, my right to act, my right to love are represented by this image of a joined hand and foot: together they form a heart. We are born free!

Therefore it is essential to be conscious firstly of ones own worth and strength and secondly of the effects of global capitalism on individuals and societies today. Groups and communities made up of strong individuals will thrive in the process of humanisation. If we want to change the system we must unite and show solidarity to each other against the capitalistic ideologies at all levels. And in order to achieve this we must strive first for transparency by improving communication, coordination and organisation of the work.



These are the steps that need to be taken:

**1. Fundamental ideological change of individuals, groups and societies with regard to:
Political, economical, social and cultural aspects today**

(a) Sensitisation of individuals, groups and societies by:

- Clear evaluation of situations
- Acceptance of the status question
- Education (informal and formal - personal and in a system)

(b) Humanisation by:

- Understanding and breaking FEAR
- Speaking out about injustices to oneself and others
- Being active with others together

(c) Solidarity by:

- Support - financially, in the media, practically
- Organize stable structures of protest
- Mature understanding of the relationship between protesters and supporters

2. Fundamental practical strategies:

(a) Short term goals:

- Organising sleeping places
- Organising tickets for public transport
- Organising German language courses
- Organising medical treatment,
- Creating the refugee social center
- Creating full packages for refugees with deportations including legal support

(b) Long term goals:

- Changing of asylum laws
- Achieving the working permit
- Achieving trade union membership
- Achieving the medical insurance card
- Achieving university free entry

(c) Targeting:

- Politicians on local, national, and international levels
- NGOs
- Public institutions
- Trade unions
- Churches
- Mosques
- Traditional/ Cultural leaders
- Businessmen/women

(d) Plan for refugees, supporters and citizens together:

- Boycotting the lagers
- Blockages/ road blocks
- Practising occupations
- Creating public rallies
- Organising street protests
- Organising protest marches
- Organising protest tents
- Not following conservative politicians for instance by boycotting elections because elections organised by the capitalists will never be free and fair
- Or vote for leftwing politicians who may have a vision of changing things
- Refusing the naming of streets with colonial perpetrators
- Refusing the focus on capitalist ventures such as shopping centres and malls, products and money in general, the privatisation of hospitals, schools and universities etc.
- Questioning conservative media
- Questioning the absolute authority of judges

(e) Plan for refugees alone:

- Creating private houses, schools, health clinics, shops, media, free markets, free jobs
- Producing own products
- Creating alternative trade

- Opening negotiations and dialogues with politicians, neighbours, lawyers, judges, Students, Voters, professors, doctors, Businessmen/women, Artists, journalists, religious and cultural leaders, policemen/ women etc
- Creating campaigns
- creating petitions

The greatest challenge of all is to coordinate, cross-reference all these efforts and make them work most effectively together.

ARU and Bismarck

In order to create a framework for these theoretical and practical measures I founded the African Refugees Union (ARU). It is a Black Refugees Civil Rights Movement (BRCRM) Initiative in Berlin, founded because of all my experiences in the Lager and along the way from Passau to Berlin. I was inspired above all by "Plantation Memories", written by Grada Kilomba. She is a professor at Humboldt University in Berlin and motivated me to read more about the Black Panther movement in the USA led by Martin Luther King, and the Pan Africans - the Africans who liberated themselves from colonialism. Kwame Nkrumah said "We must unite and decolonise Africa". Other Pan Africans were the young Patrice Rumumba, Thomas Sankara who shaped a whole generation in the Eighties, Steve Biko, Julius Malema and of course, Nelson Mandela. Further thinkers and doers in this context are Franz Fanon, Rosa Parks, Angela Davis and Malcom X. He travelled everywhere and strove to connect the people in Africa with the blacks in the USA. From all these people comes the message: it is important that we Africans remember what happened to us during the time of imperialism and empower ourselves again.



The ARU Logo, designed by Patras Bwansi

Now I have been in Berlin for two years, I have enough experience singing "Kein Mensch ist illegal - no border no nation, stop deportation!" I have found the protest empowering and I am happy that it has made me who I am today. Because today I have different ideas than before I tested the Lager life and before we started this new form of resistance (the tent protest) in Passau and in Berlin in August 2012.

But everywhere I was confronted with strange questions: "Please, can you tell me the reasons why exactly you left your home country?" - Yes! - "Can you tell me why are you protesting here?" - Yes! - "Can you tell us why you are here and not in another European country?" - Yes! - "Why did you chose Germany?...Why do you not speak German?...And why are you demonstrating here?" - Yes! - I realised that some historical facts have gone missing in the conscience of this

society. These, I believe, are the fundamental reasons why we are here in Berlin, Germany, Europe, but also in the USA, and elsewhere in the world outside of our home countries, outside of our home continent today. Effects of imperialism and colonialism determine the shape and conditions in my home country Uganda and other countries in my mother continent Africa until today.



Berlin Conference - By the time of the Berlin Conference in 1884, European activity in Africa was limited to around 20% of the continent. Otto von Bismarck, the German Chancellor, seeing no room for expansion in Europe following the unification of Germany the previous decade, convened the conference in Berlin that resulted in over a thousand indigenous cultures being divided up into fifty new 'countries'. (source: Africana Age)

Then I discovered that in this city, Berlin, where the authorities had told me that I would have no chance of asylum, is the very place where the plan that influenced my continent dramatically and badly, was designed in. The 'Berlin Conference' in 1884/85 organized by the first German chancellor Otto von Bismarck brought together 14 European countries in order to share Africa out between them. Allegedly the conference was called in order to stop slavery. But this was stated in order to justify going to Africa again and again. And no African leader had been invited. The conference is now known as the 'Scramble for Africa'. The conference had also been designed by Bismarck to solve political problems inside Europe, because it was the time of the industrial revolution and growing competition. The attending countries considered Africa like raw material to feed the industrial revolution. In the end they came out with a Charta consisting of 38 Articles - all the strategies, all the plans, all the economical interests are there. I read them, it is fascinating and very smart.

It may be too easy to say that we are here because of the Berlin conference 1884 and its consequences, but the facts and connections must be acknowledged within the German society and by the authorities. In my case what matters particularly is the genocide committed by the Germans on the Herero and Nama people in Namibia between 1904 and 1908. There are countless other examples that destroyed the balance of life in Africa and continues to do so until today. The colonies fragmented and divided African societies which produced civil wars until today - in Sudan, Uganda, Congo, Rwanda, Nigeria, Mali, Namibia, South Africa and others. The instrument of development aid and military collaboration controls lawmaking and governing. Furthermore it is well known in this post-colonial - or rather neo-colonial - era that the EU and the International World Bank control and destroy African markets.

The African Refugee Union aims to offer and spread information about this in order to support the process of reducing FEAR and creating equality.

Bino Byansi Byakuleka, formerly known as Patras Bwansi, born in 1979 in Kebale, Uganda is a Textile Artist who currently lives in Berlin. In 2010 August he became a refugee in Germany and spent almost two years in the refugee camp in Breitenburg near Passau in Bavaria. In August 2012 he started a protest tent in Passau Klostergarten and in October he joined the refugee protest camp in Berlin-Kreuzberg at Oranienplatz. Since then he is a full time political activist to change the asylum system in Germany and for LGBTIQ rights. In 2013 he founded the African Refugees Union (ARU) and in 2014 the campaign "WE ARE BORN FREE! MY RIGHT IS YOUR RIGHT!" which is aiming at refugees being intergrated increasingly in everyday life. In this context he gives many workshops in schools, universities and other institutions.

In January 2015 he published the German essay "Mein Name ist Bino Byansi Byakuleka" in cooperation with Lydia Ziemke with the Berlin digital publishing house mikrotext, which will also be published with mikrotext in an English version. <http://www.mikrotext.de/books/patras-bwansi-lydia-ziemke-mein-name-ist-bino-byansi-byakuleka-doppel-essay/>