FRIEDENSNOTE NR. 61 · BACKSTAGE

Let the terror finally end!

For his song „Free Palestine“ the rapper Bustek was censored because his song was „too topical“ – but he refuses to be swayed by it.

„Not pro-Israel, not pro-Palestine. I only see victims who did not deserve to die.“ The music world ought really to be glad that songs like this exist: moving, thoroughly topical, professionally produced and in no way partisan — unless one objects to the artist taking the side of humanity, and thereby the side of the victims on both sides of the front line. Although the song clearly states that it is not directed against peoples and religions but against guilty individuals and groups, the internet launched a veritable censorship rampage against it. Again and again „Free Palestine“ was banned, hidden, its click counts corrected downwards — a punishment that is almost customary these days for the crime of creating engaged art.

Here Bustek recounts how he came to be a political rapper and what moves him in particular when it comes to the subject of Israel and Palestine.

PUBLISHED 23. March 2024

AUTHOR Rapper Bustek

SONG	Free Palestine
PERFORMER	Rapper Bustek
ALBUM	Akzeptanz, 2024

What makes a person who they are? What if I am mistaken? What if the others are mistaken, and what is the respective consequence of that? What kind of person do I want to be? Which is better, equality or justice?

There are many questions that accompany me!

I think it lies in human nature to ask questions, to search for answers and then to question those in turn. Because every new answer raises new questions.

What is the truth? What is my truth, and in what relation do these two stand to one another? Does my map resemble the landscape, or is my interpretation of things merely an illusion?

All these trains of thought have contributed to my orienting my music, over the past 4 years, more and more towards the political and towards social criticism.

The crimes of the Corona hysteria, the destruction of our economy, our values and humanity, subjects such as paedophilia or the warmongering against Russia under the cloak of the Ukraine war and the suppression of peace talks – I addressed this and much more besides, and thereby catapulted myself out of bounds in the media.

My songs are deleted on the streaming platforms or, depending on the case, noticeably „shadowbanned“. Payment providers such as PayPal cancel accounts without any comprehensible reason, and despite steadily rising follower numbers – which are again and again corrected back down – I have at most 10 percent of the views, compared to songs that I had released with not even a third of today’s follower numbers.

The whole thing reached its high point so far, and the definitive collapse of my streaming figures, at the end of 2023 through two songs. In one of them I artistically reworked and quoted the farewell letter of a 17-year-old from the „Corona era“, from January 2021, whereupon YouTube accused me of glorifying suicide, even though a documentary would, according to the guidelines, have been permitted – which YouTube, however, refuses to acknowledge in the case of this song! The song

„Keine, keine wahre Geschichte“ – in reference to the Samy Deluxe song „Keine wahre Geschichte“ – can therefore only be found heavily censored on YouTube, and the original unedited video only on Telegram.

And, on the other hand, the song „Free Palestine“, for which I was arrested at a demonstration, whereupon I had to rephrase a morally entirely defensible question as a precaution. My heartfelt thanks at this point to Markus Haintz for his legal support and his counsel.

After the song was uploaded, YouTube restricted my figures even further and for months went on continually stealing yet more follower numbers, likes and view counts from me.

> *The crowning touch, however, was delivered by all the major streaming platforms, which, despite being competitors, turned to our publisher in a joint letter of protest and issued a cease-and-desist over my song.*

The justification: "We do not want to distribute a song on such a topical subject on our platform." So it was in no way about the content, but solely about the fact that the subject was too topical for them!

Anyone who listens to the song „Bustek – free palestine“ on YouTube will quickly notice that on the one hand I strongly criticise how civilians, women and children in Gaza are being slaughtered, but that I also take a very clear position on the crimes committed by Hamas.

However, I also draw attention to the fact that the war has already been going on for 75 years and not just since 7 October 2023, and nevertheless, particularly in the video, I find a clear distancing from antisemitism – which already sounds abstract, that this should be necessary, when one considers that in this war Semites are fighting against Semites.

Nevertheless, since I see people – whether Jews, Arabs or of any other ethnicity – only as people, with this song I pose a question to humanity, to proportionality, and I call for the peace of all nations.

Nevertheless, Spotify, Apple, Deezer & Co. decided in favour of this letter of protest and, until further notice, banned the song on their platforms!

The „joke“ of the whole thing! Just go to Spotify and type in Free Palestine, because on this topical subject there is indeed an enormous number of songs!

So whether it is about my person or an explosive subject, „cancel culture“ – the cancelling of our culture – takes place not on the basis of content, but on the basis of narratives.

My subsequent single „Steht in Flammen“ is restricted on YouTube because I fade in images from Gaza, heavily washed out, in the background. I learned this after, following a sharp drop in view counts, I ran the test and wanted to have the song promoted through a company. The reason for the restriction: Negative images!

My conclusion of the past years is this: whoever refuses to let himself be instrumentalised will find his art and the voicing of his opinion made ever more difficult, and artists like me are silenced in the most varied ways and by the most varied institutions.

Which brings me back to the questions: what kind of person do I want to be?! What am I prepared to risk?! And what would be the consequence, should I be mistaken!

All the songs mentioned are single releases from my album „Akzeptanz“, appearing in mid-2024, and for me the shadowban is a distinction and only proves how real the music I make is!

Thank you for your attention!

Yours, Bustek

LISTEN & WATCH

FIRST PUBLISHED ON MANOVA

www.manova.news/artikel/lasst-den-terror-endlich-enden

AUDIO VERSION OF THIS ARTICLE · RADIO MÜNCHEN

radiomuenchen.net/de/podcast-archiv/sendeformate/friedensnoten/2532-friedensnoten-58-lasst-den-terror-endlich-enden-von-rapper-bustak.html

THE SONG IN ITS ORIGINAL · YOUTUBE

www.youtube.com/watch?v=mi3_Qaofg_0

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rapper Bustek

Der Berliner Rapper Bustek, Jahrgang 1990, ist in Ost-Berlin geboren. Obwohl seine Musik schon immer sozialkritisch war, entschied sich Bustek seit der Coronahysterie 2020, seine Musik noch kritischer und noch politischer zu gestalten und startete damit einen musikalischen Neuanfang.

Seitdem hat er zahlreiche Projekte als Einzelkünstler und zusammen mit dem Kollektiv Rapbellions veröffentlicht und damit vielen Menschen aus der Seele gesprochen und ihnen Kraft in einer dunklen Zeit geschenkt. Im Juli 2024 erscheint sein Album „Akzeptanz“.

Website: bustekmusik.de

Source: https://friedensnoten.de/en/articles/let-the-terror-finally-end/