

BATTLE OR SPIRIT – COMPARING TWO TEXTS

In the film the two rappers of NOZ sing the following text:

*I look at my life
And it seems hopeless
I can't call or pretend will I make it to the shore
Will I fall into the brink
Regardless we never forget
where we're from
We were born to respect to all the fear
We are the future leaders of this righteous band
We gotta initiate a plan to get back the land
The government decided to borrow our life
On a rez infested with death and sorrow
Tunkashila didn't put us here, we were forced here
No chance to advance
Our culture will never survive if the language dies
Deep down inside I hear the elders cry
Half my generation is locked up
The other half's dying
The tribe will never survive on this budget
No wonder why I fight...
Dedicated to Lucy and Johnny and Sleevy,
we are „the native outlaws“...*

What problems do the young rappers take up in their song?
What cultural consciousness do they have?

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WIRTSCHAFTS
UNIVERSITÄT
WIEN
WU
IN DER SCHULE

The poet, musician, actor and activist John Trudell, who has been a passionate advocate of the rights of the North American Indians for years, says in the film:

*I got no fight with the American government.
I got no fight with America.
I don't agree with 99.9 % of who they are and what they do.
And I would articulate that and express that to the best of my ability.
But that's about thinking.
I think we need to be thinking more and fighting less.
Because all this fighting is getting in the way of thinking, and that means that
we're not being as coherent as we should be.
Because anybody who wants to change the situation, no matter who we are,
or where we are, those of us that feel aware of the down-trodden...
if we wanna change our situation, then it's important that we think this out!
We think, we use our intelligence and think our way through it, because if
we wanna fight... in reality this is a battle of Wits!
And if there is any change of us... of them not winning, I don't even know if
we can win, but if there's any change of them not winning, we really have to
get it!
If there is a battle going on, then it's a battle of Wits.*

Although the rappers and John Trudell are supporting the same thing, their messages are quite contradictory. Discuss these contradictions and try to explain.

Write your own rap texts to discuss your culture and society critically. Sing the texts and compare them to the text of the two young Indians. Where do the statements of the texts differ, where are they similar? Why?

ON THE TRACE OF JOHN TRUDELL

Several times a year the musician and activist John Trudell, who lives in Los Angeles, visits the Kili Radio Station as a surprise guest. For decades he has been one of the most important characters of the Indian independence movement. His whole life and work has been tragically characterized by his commitment.

Collect as much information as possible about this colourful personality and make a portrait in word and image.

Discuss the lyrics (following page) of John Trudells song.





LISTENING / HONOR SONG FROM JOHN TRUDELL

I WAS LISTENING TO THE VOICES OF LIFE
CHANTING IN UNISON
CARRY ON THE STRUGGLE
THE GENERATIONS SURGE TOGETHER
IN RESISTANCE
TO MEET THE REALITY OF POWER

MOTHER EARTH EMBRACES HER CHILDREN
IN NATUREL BEAUTY TO LAST BEYOND
OPPRESSORS BRUTALITY
AS THE BUTTERFLY FLOATS INTO LIFE
WE ARE THE SPIRIT OF NATURELS LIFE
WHICH IS FOREVER

THE POWER OF UNDERSTANDING
REAL CONNECTIONS TO SPIRIT
IS MEANING OUR RESISTANCE OUR STRUGGLE
IS NOT SACRIFICE LOST
IT IS NATURAL ENERGY PROPERLY USED

ONE TIME
I WAS VISITING WITH MY RELATIVES
THE CLOUDS THE MOUNTAINS THE SKY
THE TREES
MY RELATIVES TOUCHED MY SPIRIT
NUDGED IT LOVINGLY
LISTEN TO US IMPATIENT ONE
WE ARE FOREVER
YOU MUST REMEMBER THE GENTLENESS OF TIME
YOU ARE STRUGGLING TO BE WHO YOU ARE
YOU SAY YOU WANT TO LEARN THE OLD WAYS
STRUGGLING TO LEARN
WHEN ALL YOU MUST DO IS REMEMBER
REMEMBER THE PEOPLE
REMEMBER SKY AND EARTH
REMEMBER THE PEOPLE
HAVE ALWAYS STRUGGLED TO LIVE
IN HARMONY IN PEACE

STRUGGLE AGAINST SELFISHNESS AND
WEAKNESS SO THE PEOPLE MAY LIVE
AS NATION
THE OLD WAYS ARE HARD
THE PEOPLE HAVE ALWAYS HAD
TO WORK TOGETHER
REMEMBER IMPATIENT ONE
REMEMBER AND LIVE
DO NOT BE AFRAID OF TRUTH
RESPECT DISCIPLINE
SHARE YOUR LIFE SO THE PEOPLE MAY LIVE
HONOR SKY AND EARTH
HONOR YOURSELF

HONOR YOUR RELATIONS
REMEMBER IMPATIENT ONE
THE GENTLENESS OF TIME

GRANDMOTHER MOON

YOU ARE MORE THAN LIGHT IN THE NIGHT
YOU ARE MORE THAN THE MOON
YOU ARE SPIRIT CONNECTION
YOUR ENERGY IS OUR LIFE
YOU ARE MEMORIES TO GENERATIONS PAST
YOU ARE THE CREATOR OF SENSATIONS
THAT WILL ALWAYS LAST
YOU ARE THE KNOWLEDGE THE TEACHER
THE INFLUENCE TO KEEP THE PEOPLE SANE
YOU ARE THE HEALER OF SPIRIT PAIN

GRANDMOTHER MOON

WE LOVE YOU AND WE ARE ANGRY
AT THE INVADERS WHO TRASH YOU
AND VIOLATE OUR UNIVERSE WITH
THEIR MECHANICAL UNCLEANLINESS
WE PRAY FOR YOU FOR US AND FOR THE
INVADER WHO JUST CAN'T COMPREHEND
RESPECT LOVE OR THE BALANCE OF LIFE
WE DO NOT JOIN THE INVADING MADNESS
FROM THE WAY THEY ACT
IT SPEAKS OF SPIRIT SADNESS
MACHINE MONEY PROGRESS IS THE
CAUSE OF OUR COMMON ABUSE

WE SEE YOU GRANDMOTHER
WE FEEL YOU
WE LOVE YOU
WE KNOW THROUGH YOUR REALITY
WE WILL ENDURE
WE ARE ONE
WE PRAY FOR YOU
WE PRAY TO YOU

GRANDFATHERS WHISPERING IN THE WIND
REJOICE AT THE LIFE YOU ARE A PART OF
NATURAL ENERGY BOUND TO NATURAL LAWS
YOU WILL SURVIVE THIS
TEMPORARY MADNESS IMPOSED UPON YOU
NATURAL LIFE IS LONGER
THAN OPPRESSORS
ILLUSIONARY INSANITY
SPIRITS EXPERIENCE HUMAN DEEDS
BUT NEED NOT END
THIS IS JUST ONE PLACE OF CHANGES

SPIRIT LIFE IS FOREVER IF YOU WANT
THE UNIVERSE IS YOUR HOME
YOU CAN SURVIVE HERE
DO NOT LET THEM KILL YOU
KEEP YOUR SPIRIT STRONG
FOR DISTANT STARS AND DISTANT DRUMS
ARE THE MEMORIES OF SPIRIT INFANCY
CHILDREN OF EARTH LET THE SPIRIT LIVE
SO YOU CAN GROW IN YOUR PLACE
IN THE UNIVERSE



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INFORMATION
IN DER SCHULE

LEONARD PELTIER – 32 YEARS INNOCENTLY IN PRISON

Leonard Peltier is one of the most important role models of the Indian identity and for decades he has been THE symbol of the suppression of the Indians. Peltier is often called the „Nelson Mandela of America“. For 32 years he has been living in a cell of two by four meters. His release is planned for 2041. He would be 97 years old.

Why exactly Leonard Peltier has been imprisoned for such a long time?
Why is he a symbol and a role model of the North American Indians?

20 million persons of different nationalities and a large number of celebrities have petitioned for the reopening of the trial and the release of Peltier – in vain so far!

Discuss the reasons of the US authorities to resist the pressure although the innocence of Peltier is generally admitted.



**MURDER; INTERSTATE FLIGHT - ATTEMPTED MURDER;
NATIONAL FIREARMS ACT**

WANTED BY FBI

LEONARD PELTIER

FBI No. 631,091 D
I. O. 4881
12-3-75

ALIASES: Leonard Littleshell, Luis Martinez, John Yellow Robe, Leonard Williams
NCIC: D000SP11P1D016P1PI I 70 W 001 24

9 0 35 W 011 17 Ref: 30
I 20 W 001 24

Photograph taken 1972

Photograph taken 1974

Leonard Peltier

DESCRIPTION
AGE: 37, born September 12, 1944, Grand Forks, North Dakota
HEIGHT: 5'11"
EYES: brown
WEIGHT: 190 pounds
COMPLEXION: medium
BUILD: muscular
RACE: Indian
HAIR: black
NATIONALITY: American
OCCUPATIONS: body and fender work, carpenter, employment manager,
bus driver
SCARS AND MARKS: birthmark on right cheek, scar on left cheek, scar
on left side of neck, tattoo: a rose on upper outer right arm, "Lewest"
on upper outer left arm
REMARKS: now has wavy, shoulder hair, mustache and goatee
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS USED: 543-50-5518, 543-50-5417,
543-50-5416

CAUTION
PELTIER HAS POSSESSED NUMEROUS FIREARMS AND DESTRUCTIVE
DEVICES AND HAS RESISTED ARREST BY FIRING AT POLICE OFFI-
CERS IN THE PAST. CONSIDER ARMED AND EXTREMELY DAN-
GEROUS.

Federal warrants were issued August 9, 1974, at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, charging Peltier with unlawful interstate flight to avoid prosecution for attempted murder (Title 18, U. S. Code, Section 1202), November 25, 1975, at Rapid City, South Dakota, charging Peltier with murder - first degree, killing two Federal officers while in the performance of their duties and aiding and abetting (Title 18, U. S. Code, Sections 1111, 1114 and 21) and on November 25, 1975, at Portland, Oregon, charging Peltier with possession of destructive device and possession of firearms in violation of the National Firearms Act (Title 26, U. S. Code, Sections 5861 (d), 5861 (h) and 5871), respectively.

**IF YOU HAVE INFORMATION CONCERNING THIS PERSON, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL FBI OFFICE,
TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND ADDRESSES OF ALL FBI OFFICES LISTED ON BACK.**

Identification Order 4881
December 3, 1975

Carl Kelley
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Washington, D. C. 20535

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WIKIPLUCK UP
IN DER SCHULE

AMERICAN INDIAN MOVEMENT (AIM) VERSUS BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS (BIA)

AIM and BIA are two important institutions in the history of the North American Indians.

Read the text on the web page www.aimovement.org/ggc/index.html and describe what the American Indian Movement is.

Read the text on the web page www.doi.gov/bia/bia.html and describe what the Bureau of Indian Affairs is.

Discuss or describe in writing the reasons for the years of struggle between these two institutions.

American Indian Movement
Grand Governing Council

Red Man's Great International Warrior Society

Pledged to fight White Man's injustice to Indians, his oppression, persecution, discrimination and malfeasance in the handling of Indian Affairs. No one in North America is too remote when trouble impends for Indians. AIM shall be there to help the Native People regain human rights and achieve institutions and revolutions.

- printing and words by request
Mohawk writer Louis Mail
December 1972

- membership
- A Brief History of the American Indian Movement

AIM-GGC Profile

WHAT IS THE AMERICAN INDIAN MOVEMENT?

Things will never be same again and that is what the American Indian Movement is about ...
They are respected by many, hated by some, but they are never ignored ...
They are the catalyst for Indian Sovereignty ...
They intend to raise questions in the minds of all, questions that have gone to sleep in the minds of Indian and non-Indian alike ...
From the outside, AIM people are tough people, they had to be ...
AIM was born out of the dark violence of police brutality and vicious despair of Indian people in the courts of Minneapolis, Minnesota ...
AIM was born because a few knew that it was enough, enough to endure for themselves and all others like them who were people without power or rights ...
AIM people have known the insides of jails, the long wait, the no appeal of the courts for Indians, because many of them were there ...
From the inside AIM people are cleansing themselves, many have returned to the old traditional religions of their tribes, away from the confused notions of a society that has made them slaves of their own unguided lives ...
AIM is first, a spiritual movement, a religious rebirth, and then the re-birth of dignity and pride in a people ...
AIM succeeds because they have beliefs to act upon ...
The American Indian Movement is attempting to connect the realities of the past with the promise of tomorrow ...
They are people in a hurry, because they know that the dignity of a person can be snuffed by despair and a belt in a cell of a city jail ...
They know that the darkest hopes of the old people could die with them ...
They know that the Indian way is not tolerated in White America, because it is not acknowledged as a decent way to be ...
Sovereignty, Land, and Culture cannot endure if a people is not left in peace ...
The American Indian Movement is then, the Warrior Class of this century, who are bound to the bond of the Drum, who were with their bodies inscribed of their mouths ... **THEIR BUSINESS IS HOPE.**

*Words and thoughts by Virgil Ellis Straight,
Ojibwa Lakota Nation,
Author, Richard LaCourse, Director,
American Indian Press Association 1972*

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

Mission Statement

The Bureau of Indian Affairs' mission is to enhance the quality of life, to promote economic opportunity, and to carry out the responsibility to protect and improve the trust assets of American Indians, Indian tribes and Alaska Natives.

History of BIA

Since its inception in 1824, the Bureau of Indian Affairs has been both a witness to and a principal player in the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes and Alaska Native villages. Over the years, the BIA has been involved in the implementation of Federal laws that have greatly affected all Americans. The General Allotment Act of 1887 opened tribal lands west of the Mississippi to non-Indian settlers, the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 granted American Indians and Alaska Natives U.S. citizenship and the right to vote, and the New Deal and the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 established modern tribal governments. The World War II period of relocation and the post-war termination era of the 1950s led to the actions of the 1980s and 1970s that take the behavior of the BIA's predecessors and resulted in the creation of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975. The Tribal Self-Governance Act of 1994 along with the Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act have fundamentally changed how the Federal Government and the tribes conduct business with each other.