

Brown, Vinson (1912–1991)

Vinson Brown of California was a naturalist and anthropologist, a publisher and author of 37 books, with a lifelong interest in and appreciation for Native American cultures and beliefs. In addition to writing a number of nature guides, science handbooks, and works on science and religion, he collected and published legends, dreams and stories of the spiritual quests, values, prophesies and visions of different Native American tribes. As a member of the Bahá'í Faith, he was particularly attracted to visions of a future world of peace and unity, and he worked to revive and encourage Native American beliefs and spirituality. He inherited from his father the pipe bag that was supposed to have belonged to the famous Lakota (Sioux) chief, warrior and holy man Crazy Horse (1842–1877), and was its keeper for forty years. With another Bahá'í of Inuit background, William Willoya, he wrote *Warriors of the Rainbow: Strange and Prophetic Dreams of the Indian Peoples* in 1962, including his own childhood dream of proud Indian warriors marching into the sky like a multicolored rainbow, symbolizing the revival of Native American cultures. This book was taken by the first Greenpeace activists on the old fishing boat they chartered to protest nuclear testing in the Aleutians, and it so marked them that it helped to form the Greenpeace philosophy and vision, symbolized by the naming of one of their ships the *Rainbow Warrior*.

Arthur Dahl

Further Reading

- Brown, Vinson. *Tracking the Glorious Lord*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1987.
- Brown, Vinson. *Great upon the Mountain: Crazy Horse of America*. Healdsburg, CA: Naturegraph Publishers, 1971.
- Willoya, William and Vinson Brown. *Warriors of the Rainbow: Strange and Prophetic Indian Dreams*. Healdsburg, CA: Naturegraph Company, 1962.
- See also: Bahá'í Faith; Greenpeace.

Buber, Martin (1878–1965)

Martin Buber was one of the twentieth century's leading Jewish philosophers and theologians. He is known primarily for his seminal existential work *I and Thou* (1923), where he defines the world based on two primary words, or relations, "I-Thou" and "I-It." The world of the I-It is the everyday world of unequal human interaction; the world of the I-Thou is the encountered world of relation between persons characterized by mutuality and openness. This later relation is possible not only between humans but also with God and other natural entities.

Though sometimes opaque, the possibility of an I-Thou relationship with nature was fundamental to Buber's ontology of human existence. From the perspective of I-It, a natural object, such as a tree, is a mere object of inquiry. But, "It can, however, also come about, if I have both will and grace, that in considering the tree I become bound up in relation to it. The tree is no longer It" (Buber 1958: 7). Buber claimed however that the possibility of an I-Thou relationship with nature did not necessarily imply some form of animism.

Buber's work has been most influential on those environmental thinkers concerned with a redescription of human ontology (or being) as part of rather than apart from nature as key to forming a new environmental consciousness. Arne Naess has drawn inspiration from Buber's work claiming that the deep ecological approach "... also entails a transition from I-It attitudes to I-Thou attitudes ..." (Naess 1989: 174).

Andrew Light

Further Reading

- Buber, Martin. *I and Thou*. Roland Gregor Smith, tr. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958 (1923).
- Light, Andrew. "The Role of Technology in Environmental Questions: Martin Buber & Deep Ecology." *Research in Philosophy and Technology* 12 (1992), 83–104.
- Naess, Arne. *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle*. David Rothenberg, tr. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- See also: Deep Ecology; Judaism; Naess, Arne.

Buddha

The Buddha lived more than two thousand years ago in northeastern India. The religion he established spread throughout all parts of Asia and is now widely practiced in Europe and North America as well. The biographies of the Buddha include the *Jataka Tales* and the *Buddha Carita*. The reception and transmission of these stories shaped the later Buddhist tradition. By examining key elements of the life-story narratives and select examples of tales about his past-lives, themes can be examined that serve to underscore how the life of the Buddha might be perceived as providing a paradigmatic example of a lifestyle attuned to ecological sensitivity. We must keep in mind that that the pressing issues that have prompted the modern environmental movement did not exist at the time of the Buddha, particularly the threat of global warming, increases in cancer rates due to chemical pollution, and diminishing biodiversity worldwide. Furthermore, it could be argued that the ascetic emphasis within Buddhism would tend to ignore social problems of this nature. However, the Buddha did deal in his teachings with illness, with the