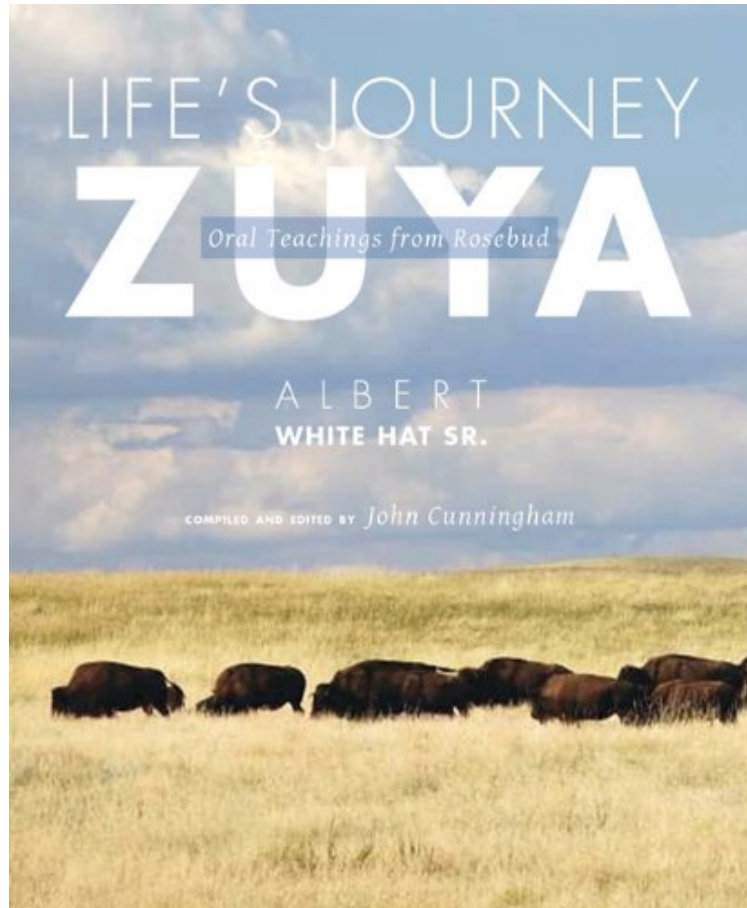


(Download) Life's JourneyZuya: Oral Teachings from Rosebud

Life's JourneyZuya: Oral Teachings from Rosebud

Albert White Hat Sr

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Albert White Hat Sr : Life's JourneyZuya: Oral Teachings from Rosebud before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Life's JourneyZuya: Oral Teachings from Rosebud:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Get it, read it, think aboutBy Customer" Zuya - Life's Journey " is a wonderfully written book by respected Elder Albert White Hat Sr.. He developed the Lakota Studies Dept. at Sinte Gleshka University and taught the Lakota language classes there using his Reading and Writing the Lakota Language book. His development of this study guide gave him much insight and knowledge of the oral story tradition of his people the Sicangu Lakota Oyate. " Zuya --- " is written from the perspective of one who has been there done that. The knowledge and wisdom is gleaned from his early childhood living on the Rosebud Reservation, the years at the boarding schools trying to gain the knowledge to make his way in the society of the white man. Eventually moving back to Rosebud he started his personal life journey to reclaim the ways language and wisdom of the Elders and the stories passed down to them from their Elders. This not an " as told to " thru an interpreter and is not another Black Elk speaks. Its a book you need to buy, read and if you will think about it your own Zuya will come to life. 5 STARS!!17 of 18 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful traditional stories and a revision of Lakota SpiritualityBy

Beau (Tom) Weaver This is an important book for anyone who is interested in Lakota Culture and Spirituality. It is much more than just a collection of wonderful stories and thoughtful explanations of this beautiful way of life; it can also be read as revisionist theology, a long overdue effort to "set the record straight" about one of the most influential, though often misunderstood, Native American spiritualities. For over one hundred years, Native spiritual songs, rituals, customs and ceremonies were actually illegal. By the nineteen sixties, they were almost completely wiped out by authoritarian Churches, which were given dominion over Indian Reservations by the Federal government; one group assigned to become Roman Catholics, another community, Episcopalians, etc. (Hard to believe, but true). However, a few traditional Lakota kept the old ways alive, in secret, in the back-country, away from Church and State control. Inspired by the Black Pride moment in the late sixties, young Indians began to return to their own culture, and slowly the old ceremonies and ways were revived. Because many other tribes had completely lost their own specific ceremonies and spiritual practices, the Lakota ways became an unofficial pan-Indian religion. By the early eighties, Lakota rites had been adopted and adapted by many different American Indian, and indigenous peoples worldwide, to fill the voids in their own cultures. However, much of what has been written about Lakota ways was written by, and through the cultural and spiritual bias of Christian Missionaries, who were among the earliest, and most prolific, anthropologists collecting data as the evangelized.. Even those who might have been sincerely interested in preserving what they recognized as a unique spiritual ethos, would nonetheless see it through the lens of their own monotheistic Christian worldview. Even many native people have learned what they know of their own culture by reading these early documents, as they were not raised with a knowledge of these ways firsthand, by their families. So, much of the popular understanding of Lakota Culture and Cosmology is actually a kind of Christian analog. And, according to Albert White Hat, much of that is wrong. An important part of his life's work has been to correct these misunderstandings. Albert is a native Lakota speaker, and professor of Lakota Culture at Sinte Gleska University. He is one of the recognized scholarly experts in the Lakota Language. He has done extensive research interviewing traditional elders over many years. As a linguist, he has undertaken a kind of forensic investigation into the true nature of Lakota spirituality via the etymological study of the root words in the language. Though he is an academician, he presents what amounts to a reformation of the popular understanding of Lakota spirituality, not in the form of a theological work, but in a collection of transcribed stories, classroom talks, and informal "visits," which is to say, in the form of oral tradition, the only authentic way these ideas can be correctly transmitted. What emerges is a less magical, more earthy spirituality, with much more emphasis on personal responsibility. Albert is now avoiding the phrase: "Lakota Spirituality" because, he says, the western mind will always turn that into a religious system. Albert prefers to refer to "Lakota Philosophy of Life." He reports that lately, he is even tending to avoid the words "ceremony" and "ritual", because of their association with religious structure and authority. Instead, Albert prefers "celebration" to describe Lakota practices that focus on our family relationship with all of creation. Though he was raised in the shadow of the Roman Catholic Church, Albert might laugh if he heard me describe his work as almost "Protestant," in that he deemphasizes the role of Medicine Man as a priestly authority figure. Like the protestant theological reformers, White Hat emphasizes the individual relationship with all of creation, returning Medicine Men to their traditional role as ritual specialists, not heirerarchal leaders.. This should not be understood as depriving Medicine Men of their place in the culture, but rather to rescue them from a responsibility they did not historically carry: that of being a moral example or general community or political leader. Medicine Men serve as Intermediaries, intercessors and interpreters of the archetypal spirits who have always visited the Lakota people in their ceremonies, dreams and visions. Albert clearly respects these men, and recounts many years of working closely with them. This book goes into some detail about how Medicine Men work, and how they should be approached when a ceremony is needed. But White Hat's emphasis is on personal decision and follow through, enlisting help both from spirit relatives, and the earthly extended family, rather than dependence on the Medicine Man as guru or authority figure. And, in this book, he shares some never-before published accounts of how certain Medicine Men received their visions. Much of what White Hat says, turns popular understanding of Lakota Spirituality on it's head. For example: the Lakota word "Wakantanka" (often translated "Great Spirit" or "Creator" or even the more Catholic sounding "Great Mystery") is recent addition to the language. It literally means "Big Power." Albert reports that this term is not present in the creation story, or any of the most ancient traditional songs and ceremonies. It is, in fact, an attempt to describe the Judeo Christian Godhead, when explaining the White Man's religion to another Lakota speaker, rather than a description of native cosmology. In Lakota philosophy, says White Hat, there is no hierarchy; either on earth, or in the spirit realm. We are all related, all equal. According to this understanding of Lakota philosophy, there are relatives who are in human bodies to whom I might express my needs and gratitude, and there are also relatives in the spirit world with whom I might communicate in the same way, but neither is above the other; all relatives. From White Hat's work comes a picture of Lakota culture that is more "down to earth" in many ways. For example, according to White Hat, "Wacekiye" the word which was translated by the Missionaries as: "to pray" should actually be translated: "to embrace a relative." This paints a very different picture from the idea of bowing to a superior being! The word "Unsimalayo" was rendered by the missionaries, as: "take pity on me." White Hat corrects this to mean, rather: "I have a particular need." There are many more examples of how the Lakota culture's true values are hidden "in plain sight,"

imbedded in the language. The word "Wakan," usually rendered as "sacred" by early translators actually means "that which has the power to give or take away life," but does not carry a connotation of divinity or consecration. This puts Lakota philosophy in a very different framework of thought than almost all previously published works. Over many years, I have had the great privilege of hearing "Leksi" (uncle) Albert telling these stories at formal ceremonial gatherings, and late night "visits" around a campfire over coffee. He has served the people as a Sundance leader for many years, has been recognized by the Sicangu Lakota as a tribal Chief on Rosebud, and recently as an elder who is "above criticism." Nonetheless, he has endured much criticism over the years for including people of non-Indian descent in his family, and at his ceremonial gatherings. But Albert always stood in solidarity with the central tenet of Lakota Philosophy: Mitakuye Oya'sin (We are all relatives.) Albert White Hat truly walks like he talks. Albert is one of the most unforgettable characters of my lifetime. His book *Reading And Writing the Lakota Language* is another treasure trove of stories about this beautiful Lakota way of life. Even a reader who does not wish to undertake a study of the language, will be delighted by the stories about the culture to be found throughout the volume. To White Hat, the language and the culture are inseparable. Much has been written about Lakota Culture and Spirituality. I have read most of it. I know of no author who has as much direct knowledge, or who has done as much first person research as has Albert White Hat. If I lived on Rosebud, I would surely enroll in his classes. It is such a great gift that Albert and his editor John Cunningham have taken the time to compile this invaluable collection of stories and explanations from a man who so deeply loves his culture, his people and Mitakuyape of all nations. Wopila Tanka! Beau Weaver Ojai, California

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Eye opener By Groovy Jeff Having been practicing this "Red Road" spirituality for over 15 years, I had many ideas and ill conceived notions that aren't exactly true. Our "western heads" always yearn for black and white concepts which hardly ever the case in this spirituality. Mr White Hat brings this out in this book, as well as, every Medicine Man has their own vision. I think this book really brings to life many concepts that have been convoluted over the years by the Church, boarding schools, and addiction/alcoholism. Language is the catalyst of culture and when the words change, so too the culture; this concept is brought to light by this work. I have read many books on Native culture and spirituality some good, some not so good; this one is the best!. If you are interested in the "Red Road", this is a must read.

Our people are very lucky to be here, says Albert White Hat Sr. He has lived through a time when Indians were sent to boarding schools and were not permitted to practice their own rituals. Although the Lakota people can practice their beliefs openly once again, things have changed and old ways have been forgotten. As a teacher at Sinte Gleska University in South Dakota, White Hat seeks to preserve the link the Lakota people have with their past. In *Lifes Journey Zuya*, White Hat has collected and translated the stories of medicine men, retaining the simplicity of their language so as not to interpret their words through a Western lens. This is Zuya, oral history that is lived and handed down over the generations. White Hat also shares stories from his own experience. Using anecdotes he shows not only how the Lakota lifestyle has been altered but also how Lakota words have begun to take on new meanings that lack their original connotations and generate a different picture of Lakota philosophy. Language, inter-woven with history, tells the people where they came from and who they are. By gathering the traditions and ceremonies in a single volume, with the history of how they evolved, he has secured the meaning of these practices for future generations. Filled with warmth and humor, *Lifes Journey Zuya* is an enjoyable and enlightening read.

Significant...both as a religious study and a historical study. It is much more accessible than most other books on this topic. Tom Grayson Colonnese, University of Washington