

Thus, I would recommend The Foxfire Book to the attention of folklorists. It provides an adequate introduction to southern Appalachian folklife and illustrates a successful application of folklore. A hardcover edition of the book is available from Doubleday for \$8.95.

The Rites of Modern Occult Magic, by Francis King.
224 pp. Illustrations, appendices A-I, bibliography, index.
New York: The Macmillan Company, 1971. \$5.95.

Reviewed by Josephine L. Lombardo

The title chosen for this book misrepresents to some degree its contents. To be sure certain rites are described -- as in the chapter on "Hierarchy" where the various planes of the three orders of the Golden Dawn are briefly commented upon. However ritual is relegated to a peripheral position in this work which is actually an attempt to place the contemporary interest in magic, alchemy, and other occult sciences in proper historical perspective. The author, a masonic historian and himself involved in occult groups for some twenty years, would seem to be uniquely suited to the task.

The Rosicrucian Order which King discusses is an international, fraternal order operating on a lodge system. The Rosicrucian and later off-shoots of this order expound a philosophy combining theosophy, cabalism, alchemy and various occult beliefs which purports to raise its members to a higher level of existence. The origin of the order is obscure, the first public announcement of its existence having been made in the form of four pamphlets published in the years 1614-16. The first of these pamphlets contained an allegorical account of the life of one Christian Rosycross, founder of the order, as well as information about the achievements of a secret body of initiates with supernormal powers. Although the existence of a genuine Rosicrucian Fraternity can be doubted, King concludes that this is of no real consequence. More important is the fact that belief in the order as presented in these pamphlets gave the impetus to the establishment of a number of secret societies whose members were intent upon reaching the heights of human experience.

Rosicrucianism in England began with the founding of the Iris-Urania Temple of the Golden Dawn in 1888; this is King's main object of study. However he deems it necessary to give some background material and does so in the first four chapters which are devoted to an historical survey of the interest in occultism in England, the beginnings of the Rosicrucian Order, and its relationship to Free Masonry. For the most part King's writing is lucid, highly informative, and more than slightly humorous. On the other hand, although the author maintains that the introductory material is included for those uninitiated in the topic of magic in England, he assumes quite a bit of knowledge on the part of the reader. Names are bandied about as though they were household terms, i.e. Dee (p. 20) and Ganneau (p. 23); footnoting and documentation are uneven in quality and the reviewer as at a loss to find pattern in what King considers worthy of explanation. Twice Robert Fludd, a seventeenth century Rosicrucian pologist, is cited without reference to the source of the quotation (pp. 15 and 17). Such obvious flaws mar what is certainly meant to be a scholarly contribution to the study of ritual magic.

Much of the remainder of the book focuses on the individual personalities involved in the growth and eventual decline of the Order of the Golden Dawn and its daughter organizations. The part played by poet William Butler Yeats and his conflict with the bizarre Aleister Crowley makes fascinating reading for anyone interested in English literature. This section of the book reads somewhat like a scandal sheet -- intrigues, bogus organizations, and occult attacks on disliked members are vividly described. The continuation of the beliefs and practices of the Order of the Golden Dawn by contemporary occultists are briefly treated by the author in the last three chapters. Some readers no doubt would have wished for a more thorough study of this area.

In all it can be said that King's work makes a definite contribution to the field of occult studies: by providing more than a skeleton's outline of the history of ritual magic the author is able to get to the roots of modern-day witches' covens and the phenomenal interest in the occult. Some of King's best material is included in the eight appendices, i.e. a copy of the Golden Dawn's official history lecture which was read to all newly initiated Neophytes as early as 1892, and a brief account of Yeats' involvement with the order.

The Song Tradition of Tristan da Cunha, by Peter A. Munch.

viii+ 176 pp. Index, index of song titles and first lines, bibliography, photographs.

Bloomington: Indiana University Publications, Folklore Institute Monograph Series, Vol. 22, 1970. No price indicated.

Reviewed by F. A. de Caro

Peter Munch's study of the song tradition of Tristan da Cunha, a dot of an island in the middle of the Atlantic, is undoubtedly one of the more fascinating folksong collections (cum analysis) of recent years. Much of this sense of fascination is generated by the peculiar nature of the community from which the songs were collected, a society which has had a strange history and which retains a uniquely isolated status. The island is 1500 miles from any other populated body of land, a tiny, barren, volcanic habitation which continues to support a people who carried on until recently an older mode of "British" life.

Tristan da Cunha first saw permanent settlement in 1816, when a garrison was sent to secure the place. After it was later abandoned, several members of this group remained to form some sort of Utopian community, and sailors of varying nationalities, mostly British and New England Yankee, added to their numbers. In 1827 several "women of mixed racial stock" arrived, and the island moved into a period of history when the fortunes of its inhabitants flourished with the rise and heyday of expanding maritime empires. Sealing in the surrounding area apparently had begun as early as 1812, but it was the whaling of the 1820s and later, and the trade with the East (for Tristan da Cunha is situated on what was once a favored route around the Cape of Good Hope) that turned the island into a more or less bustling way station. The islanders enjoyed what was an active and almost cosmopolitan atmosphere up through the 1870s, after which time shifting commercial trends directed oceanic traffic elsewhere. The spot became increasingly isolated. The inhabi-