

Scottsville, Harrison County." What possible relevance can this reference to the Mediterranean mother/fertility goddess have in this context? Are not the frequent references to the dove in the Bible and in the nineteenth century Protestant hymns enough to explain the presence of the dove on the tombstone of a Christian? In the same vein, the legend for 3-21, a photo of a stone on which a rose is carved, states, "This rose blossom, a pagan symbol of the ancient Mediterranean Magna Mater . . ." Again, why mention the Magna Mater, beloved by followers of Frazer, when the rose has long been a symbol for Jesus? One might as well claim that the cross that adorns so many Catholic cemeteries in so many ways is a pagan symbol and forget how Christ died. Were the people who used the crosses thinking of the pagan meaning or of Christ?

Jordan ends his book with a chapter entitled "A Legacy Squandered?" which is a strong and much-needed plea for the preservation of the rural and small town cemeteries of Texas. What he says applies equally as well to the rest of the country. In his visits to these cemeteries, I am sure that Jordan has often repeated to himself, just as I have, the opening lines of Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard," especially as the sun is sinking. Let us hope that Jordan's plea to preserve these cemeteries will not go unheeded and that his book will not prove to be an "Elegy Written for the Country Churchyard."

Omaha Tribal Myths and Trickster Tales. By Roger Welsch. Chicago: Swallow Press, 1981. Pp. 285, notes, bibliography. \$21.95 cloth.

Reviewed by John B. Wolford.

Roger Welsch retranslates eighty-one tales in this presentation of nineteenth-century Omaha folklore. His purpose is "to make available in more accurate form and with context of annotation Omaha tales collected in the nineteenth century and now generally unavailable to the public." (p. 13). The tales make for enjoyable reading, but in the areas of annotation and analysis that the volume is a disappointment.

The folklorist would appreciate the book for its compilation of traditional Omaha tales and for the readable translations of the texts. Mere presentations of texts, however, is insufficient for today's folklorists; contextual information is important for the reader to understand the text in relation to its engendering culture, its raconteur, and the situation of its emergence. Beyond the presentation of text and context, analysis and interpretation are important for understanding the folkloric item in terms of folkloristic history and theory. In presenting the tales, Welsch concentrates on the texts, gives some attention to contextual information, and barely touches analysis and interpretation.

I do not mean to denigrate Welsch's efforts. It is of value that he has made available largely inaccessible nineteenth-century Omaha texts, almost all of which come from James Owen Dorsey's book *The Cegiha Language* (1890). He has sprinkled contextual information relevant to some of the tales throughout the book, which adds to one's understanding of the tales. He offers some analysis of the tales; he simply does not offer enough. He gives no explanation for categorizing the tales as he does (what is the difference between a "trickster" and a "culture hero"?). He does not explain what a tribal myth is. He gives sketchy background information on the Omahas and the study of Indian folklore. Welsch makes a start at fleshing out his work, but it is only a start. As such, it falls far short of the potential of the study and of the researcher/compiler.

Welsch's purpose in writing this book may have been primarily to present the texts. Since all but six of the texts have been translated and published before, one might hope for more than just an updating of old translations. Although there is obvious scholarship underlying the translations and the commentaries, the audience Welsch must have had in mind probably was not the folkloristic one. Rather, this book seems to be aimed at the popular reader who would have an interest in American Indian folklore and who might be impressed with the tidbits of contextual or analytical information that Welsch provides. Beyond adding to the many text collections awaiting interpretation, Welsch's book does not advance much understanding either in Native American studies or in folklore.