

the foundation of today's Apartheid, but it became the basis of immigration restriction policy throughout the empire. Then, as now, a first generation white establishing himself away from Northern Europe was a "settler" or "colonist"; anyone else with the slightest tinge to his skin or non-Christian religion was an "immigrant." This small difference in wording is symptomatic rather than symbolic and appears even in the legislation of the Empire's "mother country" and Northern Europe today.

Richard Huttenback concentrates on Australia, which he regards as the major skeleton in the British imperial cupboard. Certainly the "White Australia" policy has long been overdue for a scrutiny such as this. The hypocrisies of British imperial policy are seldom denied today, but perhaps Huttenback exaggerates the strength and influence of such policy qua policy. Geographic separation, self-government, economic expediency, and socioreligious attitudes among the migrant Europeans are possibly stronger forces than British imperial policy ever was. The illiberal reactions of today's Australians to Asian refugees, let alone the indigenous groups, indicate rather stronger social fears and prejudices of which the legislation was built, rather than the reverse. Indeed the attempt to disenfranchise the Aborigines was partly because they were likely to vote against the government and for the Labour party, which has a better record of recognizing their interests--even their existence as human beings. The "spirit of the formula," which is the interesting core of Huttenback's work, did not die in 1910.

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Orlando Romero. *Nambe--Year One*. Berkeley: Tonatiuh International, Inc., 1976, 173 pp., \$3.95.

In the last few years the New Mexican Chicano narrative has taken a significant place within Chicano fiction. Writers like Anaya, Candelaria, and Ulibarri have revealed the uniqueness of being Chicano in New Mexico, often writing about the people who have maintained their century-old ties with past customs and ways of life. Orlando Romero's novel, *Nambe--Year One*, adds a new and interesting voice to this growing body of literature.

Written in English with some occasional Spanish, the novel moves back and forth in time to reveal the development of the poetic consciousness of Mateo, the first person narrator. However, just as important is the character of the village Nambe, a place that takes on sacred and mythic meaning. Nambe is the essence of "the energy of the universe, and the magnetism of the earth" (p. 12) that is transferred to the souls of those who are open to its influence. Perhaps we should rather say that the novel is about the developing

mystic relationship between Mateo and Nambe, symbolically represented by the gypsy of the haunting green eyes whom Mateo pursues in his mind and heart.

However, in reading *Nambe*, one has no doubt that this is Romero's first novel. It has all the mountains and valleys of a first novel, often soaring to creative heights only to fail to sustain these heights and fall to common lows. Major failings include plot and character weaknesses; Romero does not keep our interest, and this, in any novel, can be fatal. One wants to apply to the author the description near the end of the novel: "How sad the eagles of Truchas. Magnificently they have soared, never realizing all was against them" (p. 172). Romero needs to learn more about the craft of fiction, especially about distancing himself from his characters and theme.

In spite of significant literary failings, the novel should be read for its achievements. The major successes of the novel come from Romero's training as a sculptor and *santero*. The novel is alive with color and description that reveal both the physical and spiritual existence of Nambe. We move from the green eyes of the gypsy to the magenta of the Sangre de Cristo mountains to the "old widow's black" in a procession of color images as intense and powerful as the "penitential procession of memories" flooding the funeral of Mateo's great-grandfather. Romero both sculpts and paints his vision, and when he does this, he is at his best: "Black endless nights, these Lenten nights. Death-like chills, some damp, driven down the Sangre de Cristors, some dry and barren with minute bits of dust that sting like the bitter gall that drips down from the New Mexican Nazarene" (p. 163).

Through the imagery, Romero captures the mystic faith of Mateo and his growing awareness of God's beauty and power. Mateo comes to accept the cycle of life: "Another Spring full of smells of beginning life, another Summer, another Fall golden and dying, announcing that life will be born on the rot of the decaying remains, so natural to lose only to be found again" (p. 160). However, it is near the end of the novel that Romero clumsily has Mateo's grandfather state the theme: "Love your Gypsy, love your land, your fields, the streams, your beautiful lady, your graceful and spirited children, the wood you carve, and the dreams you try to weave, and, if after that, Mateo, the ugliness of men's limited imaginations keep you from soaring like your beloved eagles and hawks, then all you can say is that you've lived as we have been taught by the wisdom of your forefathers who came to this land and mixed their blood with the rhythm of the universe" (p. 169).

Nambe is a mixture of the simple and the profound, the clumsy and the beautiful, the artist and the man. It shows the potential of a writer who I believe will be heard from again in a more mature second novel.

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