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Introduction

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Introduction

Just in the final stages of preparing this publication the SPRING 1980 issue of *DAEDALUS* appeared. Its topic is "Intellect and Imagination." Excellent contributions come from professors of various disciplines, e.g. anthropology, biology, music, neurophysiology, aesthetics, and history. Such an interdisciplinary interest in imagination is the focus of our present UDR. The state of the arts is described in the introduction, "A Report on Studies of Religious Imagination." It mentions Kenneth Boulding and his book, *THE IMAGE*, as very influential in bringing together representatives of various disciplines in the general systems research. Of special interest to the introduction is the protagonist role of imagination which is strongly promoted by Ernst Bloch and truly celebrated by the biology watcher, Lewis Thomas, who favors 'hubris' as the mentality which desires to do things "reserved for the gods."

It is with pride that our UDR welcomes to its pages the writings of Thomas J.J. Altizer who in 1965 became internationally known as a Death-of-God theologian. Many will benefit from reading his "The Anonymity of God" and learn that in Altizer's approach to the religious imagination God is very much alive. The dilemma of contemporary theology is at the heart of Altizer's powerful contribution. The negative aspect of anonymity is placed within a creative intentionality which allows for the rebirth of God's presence. But first old images need to die as the wheat kernel must if it wants to bear fruit. This is very much the concern of Robert Gussner in his "Transcending and Centering." He reflects on the existential struggle of the self in search of a proper image. Gussner refers to aspects of failure and communicates redemptive insights which he has found in the wisdom of Eastern thought. He offers five notions which constitute change, which will come to fruition when we let it happen as a natural but reflective process.

The versatility and genius of Altizer justifies a second entry in this volume. It is an example of Altizer's personal association with Eastern wisdom, although he demonstrates this in a discussion of Western literature. In "Literature and Rite" we read that an original unity between myth and ritual has been broken. Literature has become separate from rite. Does literature encompass a rite by itself? Altizer holds that modern literature is characterized by the absence of traditional myth and symbol so that it can celebrate pure eternity. By the experience of the vacuum in the presence of the now we may feel invited to rename and imagine the world around us anew. This recreated freedom may constitute the rebirth of the numinous which is the seminal source of spiritual enlightenment and its imagination. Renee Rust ends her "Religious Imagination and Liturgical Time" with the same thrust. Her focus, however, is on the relevance of liturgy as "a pre-eminent occasion for the celebration of the Holy." While Altizer explains Proust's experience of recapturing what was lost in time, Rust emphasizes that time itself has become special in the liturgical affirmation of events in the course of time. By means of William O'Brien's book, *STORIES TO THE DARK*, she is able to explain that the human imagination of time operates according to certain stages. The significance of these stages is demonstrated in her discussion of developments and reinterpretations of certain holidays as memorials of what has happened. Because Liturgy is of special

interest to Rust and her ministry within the Catholic Church, she expresses her professional suggestions regarding the needed renewal in church liturgy and appeals for a religious imagination "that shaped time in ways that take the society of the Church forward as a sacrament in time..."

In "Imagination and Purgation: The Ascent of Science Towards Truth" Michael Barnes clarifies the relationship between imagination and the sciences. First he explains that science is a religious enterprise, and then he applies this description of science to religion and to theology. Martin Kastelic in his "Technology and the Human Imagination" delineates perspectives by which we can understand some developments of technology in the Western imagination. He diagnoses reasons for the present impasse of a technological fervor and points at aspects by which technology itself could take a deep breath of religiousness and continue its spirited course in history.

How imagination plays a distinct role in the analysis and interpretation of computerized data is delightfully demonstrated by Andrew M. Greeley. It is a distinct honor to include his article mainly because this prolific author has become a spokesman for many Catholics who read and think and want to grow in their faith according to contemporary knowledge and cultural developments. Personally, I respect Greeley for being well informed in theological and religious thought. Moreover, he is nobody's fool. His personal character has contributed greatly to the authenticity of his Catholic life. In "Conversational Data Analysis as an Altered State of Consciousness" he reveals his appreciation of imagination and intuition. Conversational Data Analysis is known to people in statistics and computer programs as SCSS. Greeley's article is a paper he presented at the SCSS Conference, October 2, 1977. The nature of this specialization in the social sciences is discussed somewhat, but the importance for our issue on imagination is Greeley's thesis, that "the conversational technique will unleash the creativity of the data analyst — if he has any — as it has never been unleashed before."

The last three articles illustrate how imagination permeates definite centers of our culture. With Bruno Manno's "The Catholic Imagination and its Relationship to Catholic Social Theory" we receive a preview of David Tracy's book, *The Analogical Imagination*, which is to be published by The Seabury Press this Summer. Manno discusses the meaning of analogical sacramental imagination in terms of the incarnational principle which leads to the Catholic social theory regarding personalism, subsidiarity, and pluriformity. In "Faith and Imagination" Patrick Collins brings into play aspects which concerned Rust, Greeley, and Gussner. Where Rust called for a creative imagination in liturgy, Collins narrates his own findings as a Catholic priest. Imagination is very much promoted by him because it helps people to get into the matter and become part of the data (Greeley). By means of imagination in faith we allow the power of transcendence to influence us so that we too become transfigured by this transcendence (Gussner). The UDR reader who is also part of the UD community will appreciate this inspiring article by Collins and will recognize much of his concern in the concluding contribution by Rev. Joseph W. Goetz, a neighbor of UD as pastor of the Church of the Holy Angels. He describes eloquently the religious dynamics within an aesthetic experience and promotes the artistic dynamics within an aesthetic experience and promotes the

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artistic imagination as an expression of religious dimensions in our existence.

I wish to thank our chief editor, Robert Conard for his expertise and cooperation in the dedication to make the publication of these pages professionally respectable.

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