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Cover, Introduction, Table of Contents

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REVIEW

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The University of Dayton Review, in accordance with the purposes of the University, presents articles by scholars in all academic disciplines. The editors are particularly interested in work of humanistic and Christian concern. They invite articles relating to special disciplines in the humanities and those reflecting interdisciplinary scholarship.

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Introduction

During the past few years, the *University of Dayton Review* has, on several occasions, published issues dedicated to the Nobel Prize winning German author, Heinrich Böll, under the able editorship of Professor Robert Conard. On this occasion, the present issue of the *UDR* concerns itself with an aspect of the literature of Spain.

When called upon to act as editor for this issue, it was my feeling that, on the one hand, to dedicate it principally to one author in particular would be too limiting, whereas to open it up to include all of Spanish literature would be excessively broad. I have chosen, therefore, given the fundamental nature of the University of Dayton as a Marianist institution, to group the articles around the general topic of "The Religious Theme in Spanish Literature."

In order to understand the background of this theme in Spanish literature, it is necessary to first have a basic grasp of the particular character of *Spanish* Catholicism. I have attempted first to provide such a brief, historico-sociological overview. As for the literary articles themselves, they cover a variety of genres (essay, poetry, novel, drama), authors and periods (from the 13th century poet Santob to the 79 year old philosopher, Xavier Zubiri). Although Catholicism must of necessity predominate in any consideration of this topic in Spanish literature, it is by no means the only area of religious thought considered. Unamuno's spiritual struggles were more existentialist than Catholic; Santob was a Jew, and a rabbi, working under a Catholic monarch.

Some of the articles included deal very directly with our general topic: those of Herminio Martinez (who discusses the theme of religion in the three most important Spanish philosophers of this century, Unamuno, Ortega and Zubiri) and Nelson Orringer (who speaks of the concise moral proverbs of Santob, which reflect the rabbi's own ambivalent situation in a Catholic country, but which contain profound universal meaning that transcends religious boundaries). Others are somewhat less directly concerned with the religious theme: those of Franklin Proaño (discussing the secular and religious eclecticism of the important novelist of the nineteenth century, *Clarín*) and Ricardo Diez (observing Unamuno's search for the meaning of life, as manifested in his novels).

There is also a pair of essays which, on the surface, have only a tangential relationship to the theme of religion in Spanish literature: Elisa Fernández analyzes a children's play of the beginning of this century which is daring in its defense of certain social behaviors which continue to be vehemently denounced by the Church in Spain today: divorce and living together without being married; Gonzalo Plasencia discusses the ludic component of Unamuno's thought, but, since his article deals with an author who was wholly preoccupied with the religious questions of the existence of God and the immortality of the soul, the religious topic cannot ever be completely avoided, even when ostensibly treating Unamuno's writings on sports and play.

Rosario Cambria

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