

# the christian CENTURY

SEPTEMBER 1-8, 1976



## Rudolf Bultmann: Scholar of Faith

David L. Edwards

## Episcopalians Shape a New Liturgical Life

Betty Gray



- Republicans on TV
- The B-1 Bomber: A Matter of Priorities
- Poverty and Profits in the Philippines

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## In This Issue

★ NOTED THEOLOGIAN and biblical scholar Rudolf Bultmann died at his home in Marburg, Germany, on July 30 — less than a month before his 92nd birthday. The last of Protestantism's theological giants of the neo-orthodox era, he was also perhaps the most controversial. Many of his critics contended that he conceded too much to secularism in his program of "demythologization" — an effort to translate the teachings of the New Testament into statements about the possibilities of human existence. Yet Bultmann set limits to demythologization, insisting that the New Testament contains an irreducible kerygma, "the proclamation of the decisive act of God in Christ." Offering a summation and assessment of Bultmann's thought is Anglican theologian David L. Edwards, the author of such books as *Religion and Change*, *What Do Episcopalians Believe?* and *What Is Real in Christianity?*

Editor and journalist Betty Gray recounts in these pages the background and present status of the revised Book of Common Prayer that will be up for approval by

the Episcopal Church's forthcoming General Convention. In part, her familiarity with the subject stems from membership on a subcommittee to study sexism in the prayer book's draft text.

As well as taking up liturgical matters, the two houses of the Episcopal Church's General Convention in a few weeks will, once again, make the decision as to whether or not women can be ordained as priests of the church. Bearing on this issue, as our European correspondent, Trevor Beeson, points out, are two recent communications to Anglicans from Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox bodies with whom unity dialogues are being held.

Upon one's return, 30 years later, to the scene of his or her World War II activities, expectations may fall far short of realization. Robert C. Aldridge, contributor of the Special Report on the Philippines, had that experience this past winter. In his work with a U.S. government agency responsible for adjudicating the Filipinos' war claims, he was in contact with the rise of postwar liberation movements. Invited to attend the First Asian Ecumenical Conference by its chairman, Ciriaco Lagunza, on the basis of that earlier involvement, Aldridge was finally able to make the historic trip under the sponsorship of the San Francisco archdiocese's Social Justice Commission. He is a free-lance writer and lecturer on social issues.

Contributors to the editorial section are William Lee Miller, director of the Poynter Center on American Institutions at Indiana University, Bloomington, and a longtime activist in politics; and J. Richard Peck, director of communications for the United Methodist Church's Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.

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A third group of essays presents Adams as a theorist of social ethics, with analyses of the thought of Karl Marx, Max Weber, Rudolph Sohm, Ernst Troeltsch and Paul Tillich. Tillich once wrote of Adams, "Without him I would not be what I am biographically as well as theologically," and saluted Adams's witness to *agape* of the spirit manifest in Jesus as the Christ, his prophetic involvement, his extraordinary knowledge, and his "astonishing" participation in cultural creativity.

George Williams of Harvard has noted Adams as the most significant figure in American Unitarianism in the past 50 years. Few will disagree. Whoever dips into this book will be rewarded by an encounter with an authentic — not stereotypical — religious liberal, a man of prayer, devotion and sensitivity to match that of William Ellery Channing, one whose organizational abilities and commitment equal those of Henry Bellows, and one whose gifts of intellect and spirit are unique. This book is a valuable complement to Adams's other works and a graceful acknowledgment of the many-faceted career of a leader whose contribution, though already extensive, happily shows no signs of diminishing in vigor or in value. HOWARD HUNTER.



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## Recent Arrivals

**THEY CRY, TOO! WHAT YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR MINISTER AND DIDN'T KNOW WHOM TO ASK.** By Lucille Lavendar. Hawthorn, \$6.95.

A well-intended answer book about the private life of the parson, it is a bit sentimental and coy at times. Not much help.

**BEYOND RENEWAL.** By Noah S. Martin. Herald Press, \$1.95 paperback.

Out of the "peace church" context comes this pastoral work that is quite critical of the peace the church has been making with the culture in our time. A more searching work on renewal than many we've seen in these days of growth-obsession.

**NEW POWER FOR THE CHURCH.** By Harvey Seifert. Westminster, \$3.95 paperback.

We surmise that this little book can be put to work best in the churches that have been stung by the sense that if they are mainline they must lose purpose and will decline. Seifert, a professor at the Claremont School of Theology, offers no panaceas and speaks through no platitudes. He has some good-hard-work suggestions.

**PREACHING ON NATIONAL HOLIDAYS.** Edited by Alton M. Motter. Fortress, \$2.95 paperback.

Petit sermons or contributions to other people's sermons, these holiday items come from people not typed as superpatriots or chauvinists. They remind us that not only July 4 past should elicit Christian sermons dealing with national meaning.

**OLMEC RELIGION.** By Karl W. Luckert. University of Oklahoma Press, \$9.95.

Luckert completely redoes concepts of Middle American religion as he uses the history-of-religion approach to what is presumably the oldest religion of the Mesoamerican field. The serpent looms large in his interpretation. Illustrated.

**THE RITUAL OF BATTLE.** By Alf Hildebeitel. Cornell University Press, \$19.50.

The battle-imagery in the Mahābhārata gets close-up examination in this ambitious effort to throw new light on Krishna in the epic of India.

**TIME BEFORE MORNING.** By Louis A. Allen. Crowell, \$18.95.

Wonderful color and black-and-white illustrations enhance this study of the dream-time and mythical world of Australian aborigines, a world usually approached only by experts. Now it becomes available to many more people.

**THE SON OF GOD.** By Martin Hengel. Fortress, \$3.75 paperback.

An expansion of an inaugural lecture, this is a plea for history and theology to be re-linked in biblical studies, and a case study in such linkage.

**BELONGING AND ALIENATION: RELIGIOUS FOUNDATIONS FOR THE HUMAN FUTURE.** Edited by Philip Hefner and Widick Schroeder. Center for the Scientific Study of Religion, \$10.95; paperback, \$6.50.

The CSSR (5757 University Avenue, Chicago 60637) keeps on publishing solid work on ethical-social-psychological themes. These essays grow out of south-side-Chicago

seminars; some of them are a bit provincial in their references — participants overcite their colleagues. But maybe that's part of what belonging is all about. Gibson Winter, Franklin Sherman and others join the editors in providing essays.

**THE UNIVERSITY: THE ANATOMY OF ACADEME.** By Murray G. Ross. McGraw-Hill, \$11.95.

Dr. Ross slightly overremembers the '60s and that decade's storms on campus, but he tries to move beyond '60s unsettlements to make proposals for university life in the late 1970s.

**THEOLOGY IN RECONCILIATION.** By T. F. Torrance. Eerdmans, \$9.50.

To say the least, ecumenical theology is not a hot topic in the book-publishing and buying circuit. Eerdmans's risk on this one is lessened somewhat by the fact that Torrance is held in such respect. He offers a series of lectures or essays on divergent themes, snuggled together under the "reconciliation" blanket, where they are quite comfortable.

**THE LEFT HAND OF GOD: ESSAYS ON DISCIPLINE AND PATRIOTISM.** By Gerhard A. Kroedel and others. Fortress, \$4.75 paperback.

The bicentennial seems to have evoked these essays by Lutherans, chiefly but not solely for Lutherans, on the nation, justice and the like.

**HOPE AGAINST HOPE: MOLTMANN TO MERTON IN ONE THEOLOGICAL DECADE.** By Walter Holden Capps. Fortress, \$4.75 paperback.

Rings the changes on the theology of hope theme, and does so without going over overworked territory or overannouncing the promise that resides in the hope theme. In a way, a chronicle of theological effort during the past decade.

**POSSESSION.** By Erika Bourguignon. Chandler & Sharp, \$2.50 paperback.

If you have had it with all the sensationalist writings on exorcism, this anthropological (and statistical) study of possession should bring you back to saner soil.

**THE AWARENESS TRAP: SELF-ABSORPTION INSTEAD OF SOCIAL CHANGE.** By Edwin Schur. Quadrangle, \$7.95.

Oh, this one we really, really needed and enjoyed. It was about time that someone noticed that the overdoses of awareness therapies are leaving us simply self-preoccupied. The trap, sprung.

**DILEMMAS OF MASCULINITY: A STUDY OF COLLEGE YOUTH.** By Mirra Komarovsky. Norton, \$9.95.

Ivy Leaguers subjected themselves to searching questionnaires and provided author Komarovsky with some hard data about male sex-role confusions in a time of change in women's roles; she even offers some hints about how and why to change policy.

**JESUS AS PRECURSOR.** By Robert W. Funk. Fortress and Scholars Press, \$3.95 paperback.

You'd never believe it: Jesus was precursor in a way, of Thoreau and Castaneda and Nietzsche and Camus and Henry Miller and so on; if you do not believe it, Funk at least makes an effort to make you a believer. The author is genuinely enjoying himself; he just may possibly throw new angles of vision into dark recesses of others' minds.