

approach is what I would call "philosophy-of-history," though I do not know whether this term is one which Minear himself would use to describe his perspective.

A pivotal interpretational point at which many, including this reviewer, will differ from Minear is his tendency to apply the various warnings and judgments of Revelation as being directed against Christians. As Myles M. Bourke points out in his "Foreword" to Minear's book, "If I have not misread Dr. Minear, one of his major preoccupations is to show that the tribulations sent upon men in the three visions of the seals, the trumpets, and the bowls, and also the punishments spoken of in Vision 4 . . . are not primarily, and surely not exclusively, punishments of the Church's persecutors, but of Christians who are in one way or other faithless to their vocation" (p. ix). To this view Bourke himself takes exception on various grounds (see pp. ix-xiii).

On the other hand, one must admire Minear's effort to break with the common view that the apocalyptic and prophetic literatures of the Bible are poles apart, the former being a prime example of hate literature whereas strong ethical appeal is characteristic of the latter. This view, which provides a deep cleavage between apocalyptic and prophetic, has, of course, been competently attacked also by Amos N. Wilder. However, the fact that the Apocalypse is not a "revenge missive" does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that the judgments described in that book must be intended for the church rather than for the church's persecutors.

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Pannenberg, Wolfhart, *Theology and the Kingdom of God*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969. 143 pp. \$ 2.45.

This rather slim volume contains four essays, three of which previously appeared in *Una Sancta* and the fourth in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. The size of the book is swelled by a 42-page introduction (longer than any of the chapters) by Richard John Neuhaus. His sketch of Pannenberg, the man, consists largely of personal reminiscences of the author's visit to the United States, and despite nonessential observations of Pannenberg's "unathletic build" and his "remarkably youthful, almost boyish, face," it is an engaging portrayal and provides a valuable insight into the wide range of Pannenberg's intellectual pursuits.

The first essay, after which the collection is titled, begins by calling for a transition from an ethical to an eschatological understanding of the Kingdom of God, which must be recovered as the key to the whole of Christian theology. Pannenberg's consistent emphasis on the future as a fundamental theological category is the keystone in his theological arch. He consequently rejects a formulation such as

Cullmann's D-day, V-day scheme, which gives the past priority and regards the future as merely the outgrowth of the past. Pannenberg precisely reverses this direction and regards the present not as piling up on the past so much as peeling away from the future. Destiny, rather than origin, thus becomes the key to determining the meaning of everything in the present.

Although the theme of this essay—the priority of the future—rests upon the proposition that the futurity of the Kingdom of God was foundational to Jesus' message, Pannenberg does not labor the point as to whether this was indeed the case. Presumably he has laid his historical-critical groundwork elsewhere, or intends to do so in the future.

The major portion of the second essay consists of a programmatic explication of the task of the Church and deals with a wide range of topics, including politics, liturgy, missions, and ecumenical themes. Pannenberg strenuously objects to any identification of the Church with the Kingdom of God, including the view that the Church constitutes the present reality of God's Kingdom. Instead, he equates the Church's existence with that of an organized community in the world, the primary contribution of which is identified as giving individuals access to wholeness of life in the presence of eternity. This piece on the Church is significant in demonstrating that a theology of the future need not smack of other-worldliness, but may actually provide the means by which contemporary man is freed from the authoritarian character of traditional ecclesiastical roles and thus enabled genuinely to confront the present.

In the third essay Pannenberg explores the ethical implications of the Kingdom of God. He contends that the idea of the good is essentially related to man and his world because the good is concerned with the future of this man and his world. The temptation to respond with the caveat that such a position could lead to the neglect of present responsibilities, vanishes when Pannenberg points to a third way between superficial optimism for the present and detached other-worldliness, *viz.*, commitment to the provisional. In spite of its provisionality the present must be affirmed because of that to which it is preliminary, the destiny of man and his world.

An obviously crucial question raised by this concept of provisionality is the relation of the present to the future. Precisely in what way does the present relate to the future if the one is not in fact negated by the other? This question is addressed in the concluding essay. Using as a theological model the reign of God as both future and present in the ministry of Jesus, Pannenberg proposes that appearance in the present constitutes the arrival of the future. Thus the future may be realized in the present. This would appear to place "commitment to the provisional" on firmer ground, but one has the feeling, nevertheless, that with the emphasis on the "not yet" of the future, the "even now" of the present has lost an element of certainty. It would be helpful if Pannenberg elaborated on the relation of pres-

ent to past, but the structure of his presentations is apparently determined by the primacy of the future, which is nowhere fully established.

Although this volume makes no pretensions of approximating a definitive work, it reveals the major themes in Pannenberg's thought and is a useful steppingstone to the discussion focusing on the future, which Pannenberg, along with Moltmann, has done so much to advance. While critical comparison of the two on the part of English readers awaits the futher translation of their works, *Theology and the Kingdom of God* indicates that there are themes common to both, such as the challenge to Kantian concepts of reality and history, the recasting of theological categories in light of the eschaton, and an emphasis on the social obligations of the Church. The latter stands in contrast with the individualism with which the thought of Rudolf Bultmann may be charged by the use it makes of corporate categories. While not echoing the optimism of the social gospel, future-oriented theology is an important summons to the Church to fulfill a paradoxical task—the affirmation of a world destined in some sense to pass away. This volume is a provocative introduction to the stimulating possibilities such a position suggests.

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Slusser, Dorothy M., and Gerald H. Slusser, *The Jesus of Mark's Gospel*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967. 157 pp.
\$ 2.25.

This small paperback commentary, the product of a husband-and-wife writing team, deserts the usual format of its genre. The conventional approach of introduction and verse-by-verse exegesis is eschewed; instead the authors sweep through whole sections of Mk at a time, concentrating singlemindedly on exposing the contribution of each section to the theology of the evangelist. They firmly lay to rest the notion that Mark (who is identified without elaboration as Peter's secretary) was a sloppy, semiliterate editor who put together "a mere patchwork of reminiscences" (p. 11). They cite approvingly the growing appreciation of Mark's creativity found in the treatments of Austin Ferrar, R. H. Lightfoot, John Bowman, *et al.*, and add their own emphatic judgment that "Mark's work . . . was a carefully engineered piece of literary art done by a man of great skill with an extraordinary knowledge of the Old Testament and its subtleties" (p. 12). This literary and exegetical craft was used by the evangelist to express his understanding of the meaning of the life of Jesus. Yet, though the Gospel presents the story of the life and death of Jesus, "it is no less the story of the death of the orthodox Judaism of that day" (p. 13), replete with references, both explicit and veiled in symbolism, to the crescendoing tension between Jesus and the professional exponents of the Jewish faith. Indeed, it is the Slussers' thesis that the chief purpose of Mark's Gospel was to show the dissolution of the