

■ ABSTRACTS

Klaus Fitschen, Boundary: The Federal Synod 1972 as part of the Church's determination of its position against the background of German-German developments in Church and Society

Heino Falcke's address to the synod in 1972 has to be considered against the background of German-German developments in church and politics. According to the will of the SED dictatorship, the church in the GDR should support its policy of demarcation from the Federal Republic. However, this did not fit in with the *special community of Protestant Christianity in Germany*, to which the protestant churches in the GDR were adhering too. Furthermore Falcke made his speech at a time when the government power in the GDR passed from Walter Ulbricht to Erich Honecker, which was accompanied by an intensified ideological penetration of society. At the same time, people were to be persuaded to agree to the SED dictatorship with the help of sociopolitical promises, but they were still burdened with everyday worries about the supply of consumer goods. The (quite open) question is whether the church and its concerns were still perceived in everyday life. Did the claim to be *a church for others* go into the void? Was the church no longer able to reach the secular public due to its politically enforced limitations? In his address, Heino Falcke tried to go beyond these limitations, but this not only seemed too dangerous for the state, but also too daring for many in the church.

Veronika Albrecht-Birkner, Reactions to and Receptions of Heino Falcke's Synod Lecture in the Federation of Protestant Churches in the GDR

This contribution focuses on reactions to the speech of Heino Falcke at the synod in Dresden by the Association of Protestant Churches (BEK) in the GDR until the mid-1970s. It is based mostly on archival sources and refers to the leadership of the BEK as well as singular regional churches. It turns out that there were marked differences that resulted partly from confessional motives but were not separable from political attitudes. The Evangelical church of Mecklenburg and the Evangelical church of the church province of Saxony embodied a kind of antipole in this regard. The contribution includes programmatic papers by the committee for Church and Society of the BEK as well as by the Evangelical Church of the Union. A longer-range reception of Falcke's speech in the BEK is not explicitly traceable. This is explained by the fact that the synod and the leadership of the BEK even middle- and long-dated stuck to the self-imposed verdict not to mention the speech in public.

Michael Haspel, The reactions of political parties and state agencies to Heino Falcke's synodal speech »Christus befreit – darum Kirche für andere« 1972

In this article the author argues that the strongly critical reaction of state and party officials against the synod speech of Heino Falcke »Christ liberates – thus church for