

In the meantime, Heino Falcke, who was still alive, and his synod lecture has become the subject of their own ecclesiastical East German ›culture of remembrance‹. Appreciative statements have appeared, most recently on Falcke's 90th birthday, and in 2007, on the 35th anniversary of the lecture, a conference took place in the Augustinian monastery in Erfurt. Accounts of contemporary witnesses were documented. In addition, questions were asked about the relevance to the present, which was addressed not least by Falcke himself in a series of theses.²

The idea of a scientific symposium to mark the 50th anniversary of the lecture ruled out a new edition of the 2007 conference from the outset of its planning. The project was to particularly focus on the history of reception and open up new research perspectives, as research on GDR church history had also developed further in the meantime.

In the end, due to the restrictions placed during the COVID-19 pandemic, the conference had to be held as an online symposium where the contributions were intensively discussed – which has had a positive effect on the printed versions published here. Nevertheless, a commemorative event took place on 30 June in the Augustinian Monastery in Erfurt.

The contributions did not look at the lecture in isolation but in certain contexts. The German-German perspective plays an important role here, which is determinative for the contribution by *Karl-Christoph Goldammer*, in which a panorama of media reactions becomes visible. The timing of the lecture at the beginning of Erich Honecker's term of office, which did not represent a change of system, but a realignment of the system, is also examined. Moreover, in the process, aspects of social history are also being looked at (*Klaus Fitschen's* contribution makes this attempt), although the effect of the lecture can hardly be observed outside the protestant churches. *Veronika Albrecht-Birkner* presents new details and aspects on the reception of the lecture in the Federation of Protestant Churches, giving a differentiated picture. The same applies to *Michael Haspel's* contribution on the reactions in party and state. A further and also novel perspective, namely the ecumenical perspective, is opened up by *Martin Fischer's* contribution on Protestant-Catholic relations, and this for a time in which the Catholic Church was marked by upheavals and redefinitions. *Stephen Brown* broadens the ecumenical perspective to the international level based on a wide range of sources. *Michael Haspel* deals intensively with Heino Falcke's lecture itself in a critical relecture, which could also be understood as a *retractatio* of his own previous theological approach to it. A commentary by *Claudia Lepp* places the contemporary historical contributions of the conference in the current research perspectives and gives suggestions for possible further work.

² Heino Falcke, Kirche für andere, was kann das heute heißen?, in: epd-Dokumentation 50/2007, 55–57. The documentation of the eyewitness talk is also available there.