

(WCC) with its offices in Geneva is the focus. While it might seem obvious to focus on the WCC as a global ecumenical institution covering churches in the Western and Eastern worlds as well as the global South, the choice of the United Kingdom as a case study might seem less self-evident. Yet probably no Western European country outside the Federal Republic had such a thoroughgoing reception of Falcke's address, not only within the churches but also in its media echo. Drawing on the archives of the British Council of Churches (BCC), this article seeks to elucidate the reasons for the reception of Falcke's address in Great Britain as well as its programmatic significance. In contrast to the BCC, the archival situation of the WCC does not at this stage allow a reconstruction of how Falcke's address was received in the WCC. Instead the article highlights how the WCC offered a space within which Falcke was able to develop the insights of his 1972 address for the worldwide ecumenical movement, and then to re-import them into the GDR from Geneva not least in the Conciliar process for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation.

Martin Fischer, The Vision of a »Church for Others« and the Catholic Church in the GDR

Heino Falcke's synodal speech of a »Church for Others« did not initially provoke any recognizable reactions in the Catholic Church in the GDR. No processes of reception can be traced at the level of the church leadership. The article deals with the causes of this non-reception and takes a look at a changing eastern policy of the Vatican and the relationships between the two Christian churches. In addition, the article addresses the question of how the Catholic Church dealt with its role in a socialist society in a similar way as Heino Falcke did. Alongside basic church initiatives, this consideration also includes the discussions and resolutions of the Dresden Pastoral Synod. Ultimately, it was only a new generation of bishops in the 1980s who dared to take a new pastoral position that took greater account of the reality of the GDR.

Michael Haspel, Christ frees – therefore church for others. A systematic-theological reflection of Heino Falcke's 1972 synodal speech

In this contribution Heino Falcke's famous synod speech from 1972 is subjected to a rereading. The first striking insight is that in his interpretation of Rom 8 he replaces »childhood« in the original text with sonhood. This is not in line with the interpretation of Karl Barth, but surprisingly reflects the Christology of Friedrich Gogarten. This is not only problematic with regard to gender equality, but also results in a Christological narrow and exclusive understanding of freedom. In the process, not only liberation narratives of the Old Testament are faded out, but also the inclusive concept of childhood of the Old Testament, which may include all of humankind. This individual narrowing engenders that Falcke in the second part of the talk does not use the leading concept of »church for others« any more, but favors the approach of »liberation to service« (for others) of the individual believer. The author suggests to broaden the foundation of the concept of freedom by relying on a holistic biblical approach and by this token to formulate an inclusive concept of liberation and freedom.