



The Catholic Church in Eastern Germany: Strategies and Rhetoric of a Changing Minority*

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The Catholic Church that occupies the territory of the new German states has been a minority church since the Reformation.¹ Unlike Catholics in other minority and hostile situations, such as Northern Ireland, however, Catholics in East Germany did not use the universalist aspect of their church's ideology to translate it into an assertion of universal rights; nor did some propensity to martyrdom drive them to heroic actions.² Instead, Catholics in the GDR lived a ghetto existence. Whereas Protestants are remembered for their role in the 1980s and the Peaceful Revolution, the Catholic Church played a minor, unobtrusive role in the country's political life and was known as the 'Church of Silence'.³ Yet German unification endowed Catholic organisations with a new role in the eastern German Länder (the regional states on the territory of the former GDR) that had previously been characterised by hostile policies towards religious organisations.

German unification according to Article 23 of the West German *Grundgesetz* (Basic Law or Constitution) extended the institutions and structures of the Federal Republic to the East.⁴ By the same token, East German Catholicism was integrated into the structures of West German Catholicism. Catholics have accordingly become part of an elaborate network of associations. Indeed, with its creation of new structures, restoration or expansion of older ones and takeover of formerly state-run social institutions, and with the political power now wielded by Catholics in political office, all of this constituting 'die Katholizierung von oben', to paraphrase a cynical Protestant theologian,⁵ the Catholic Church in the new German states has, since the fall of the Berlin Wall, often been seen as an ambitious minority organisation.

This paper is an attempt to describe how organised Catholicism has grappled with the challenges brought about by German unification, including the transition from a monist to a pluralist mode of religious regulation. More specifically, it will address the following two-fold question: (1) How has the small Catholic Church managed to establish a noticeable presence in eastern German institutions since reunification?; and (2) How has it reconciled this change with the separation of church and state which was promoted in the GDR? My focus will be the strategies and rhetoric of the Catholic Church and its social welfare agency,⁶ since it is through this agency that ecclesiastical actors are able to promote an alternative political agenda.⁷ In high-

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lighting these issues, I will sketch a portrait of the Catholic Church of the GDR and the new Länder – an institution which, though not as well documented as its Protestant counterpart, is certainly no less worthy of attention.⁸

Church in the Diaspora

The Catholic Church in eastern Germany is a ‘Diasporakirche mit Runzeln und Flecken’.⁹ Apart from some enclaves – the Eichsfeld, the Rhön and the Sorbian region around Bautzen – the Catholic Church that occupies the territory of the new German states is a minority church. The aftermath of the Second World War was marked by the arrival of Catholic refugees from former German territories.¹⁰ The growth of the Catholic population was accompanied by a boom in parish and welfare institutions: the ‘große Stunde der Caritas’ had arrived.¹¹ However, many of the refugees would migrate to the West before the erection of the Berlin Wall, so that the number of Catholics in eastern Germany – if we compare figures from before 1938 to those of 1989 – has remained relatively stable.¹² Regarding the weak presence of the Catholic Church in eastern Germany with respect both to the churches in the region generally and to the population that is Catholic (the so called ‘double diaspora’), Pilvousek points out: ‘This situation has shaped the history of the Catholic Church in the Soviet Zone/GDR and is reflected in the attitudes of the church and in its statements, both unofficial and official.’¹³ Significantly, since Catholic bishops, as the only members of the church entitled to express their views publicly, retained considerable authority in the GDR, an examination of some of their official statements provides some insight into the Catholic stance towards this particular communist regime.¹⁴

Political Abstinence

The attitude of the Catholic Church in the GDR towards the regime was shaped by the first primates (above all von Preysing and Döpfner) and even more by the personality of Alfred Bengsch, bishop from 1961 until 1979. The bishops of Berlin promoted a hard line, which was maintained by the whole episcopate: that of ‘political abstinence’.¹⁵ Accordingly, the Preysing Decree, named after the bishop who enacted it, forbade all clerics from participating in political activities. Clerics could not comment on current affairs; lay and group involvement in these affairs was hindered; and disgruntled elements of the church were kept silent.¹⁶ Similarly, the episcopate, under the auspices of its East German organisation – the Berlin Ordinarien Conference and, at a later stage, the Berlin Bishops’ Conference – refused to engage in talks with an ‘illegitimate state’, which it saw as dominated by a party proclaiming a ‘monopoly of truth’, an atheist and materialist ideology which left no place for religious argumentation.¹⁷ However, the bishops selectively voiced their concern through pastoral letters when the constitutionally enshrined freedom of worship and conscience were violated, as they did in the field of education (discrimination against Christians in schools, the rights of parents and guardians over children, civil consecration or ‘*Jugendweihe*’, and, to a much lesser extent, compulsory military service and instruction) and social welfare. Catholics were *de facto* doomed to a ghetto existence; they stood, as one interviewee noted, ‘draußen vor der Tür’.

Given the Catholic Church’s chilly response to state-sponsored ideology, it is not surprising that the episcopate welcomed the separation of church and state enshrined

in the East German constitution. The church accordingly rejected the financial support of the Socialist Unity Party (SED)-controlled state, making an exception only for its social welfare institutions.¹⁸ It built structures outside the state, such as those dedicated to religious instruction in the parish and to the training of priests in an independent seminary.¹⁹ This would have been impossible without the strong support of western Catholics – dioceses, Deutscher Caritasverband and Bonifatiuswerk. Indeed, all through the years of the socialist regime the Catholic Church in East Germany worked to cultivate contacts with the West; at a later stage, it also strengthened its links to the Vatican.²⁰ In this way it successfully fought for the institutional integrity of its dioceses and against the efforts of the SED to nationalise the church's structures. Unlike its Protestant counterpart, the Catholic Church succeeded in maintaining its organisational unity and independence.²¹ In contrast, the eastern churches of the Protestant Church in Germany (EKD) had, after the promulgation of the 1968 GDR constitution, created an independent federation, the Union of Protestant Churches in the GDR (BEK). This eastern federation is remembered for its controversial motto 'Church within Socialism' and for a more ambiguous attitude to the state.

Looking back at the history of the Catholic Church in the GDR, Pilvousek states: 'The history of the Catholic Church in the GDR was for the major part inconspicuous, without spectacular actions.'²² It engaged in talks neither with the state nor with its Protestant counterpart. The new rapprochement between the East German State and the Protestant Church – as displayed in the 1978 summit between Honecker and the Protestant bishop Schönherr – was rejected as a model by the Catholic Church. The social presence of the church was accentuated by the work of Caritas, its social welfare agency. In spite of the organisational monopoly sought by the SED the churches, as the only independent organisations beside the state, could own the welfare institutions that they had until then administered.²³ Through Caritas, the Catholic Church demonstrated a more pragmatic approach to state and society: in engaging in negotiations with local authorities and opening its services to non-Catholics, it provided an alternative to Bengsch's strong line. Elements of this combination of pragmatic approach and political abstinence persisted throughout the 40 years of 'real existing socialism'.²⁴ Most observers also point out a relaxing of this attitude in the 1980s.²⁵

Same Stance, New Interpretation?

During the GDR's last decade, the Catholic Church showed more openness. It seems that not only Bengsch's death but also the acknowledgement of the durability of the German Democratic Republic called for some changes. Along the same lines, Pilvousek evokes the importance of a generational change in leadership – with Meisner in Berlin, Wanke in Erfurt and Reinelt in Dresden-Meißen.²⁶ Joachim Wanke, bishop of Erfurt, heralded a new interpretation. In a 1981 lecture entitled *Der Weg der Kirche in unserem Raum: Versuch einer pastoralen Standortbestimmung* Wanke openly supported greater Catholic participation. In a society driven by atheism and materialism the church, he noted, must perform a 'dienendes Zeugnis'.²⁷ Wanke was at pains to emphasise that this endeavour was not to seek identification with or recognition of the GDR and of its political regime, but rather to try to come to terms with the duty of Catholics, as he thoughtfully put it, in 'Middle Germany'.²⁸ He argued, in clear opposition to his Evangelical counterparts and their motto 'Church within Socialism', that his church should not define itself according to an

ideology, but according to the secularised and materialist environment in which it evolved. In brief, he advocated a sort of 'reflexive interpretation' of Bengsch's stance on the Catholic Church's social commitment in East Germany.

If the 'new bishops' did acknowledge the desire of the laity for some dialogue with the rest of society – a wish already formulated by the laity at the Dresden Synod (1973–75) – no altering of internal structures was actually carried out. The Preysing Decree, which forbade Catholic participation in political life, was reinforced in 1977 and again in 1985.²⁹ In the late 1980s Catholics became more involved in the movement which was emerging around the Protestant Churches. In 1987 they organised, for the first time in the history of the GDR, a Catholic Convention (*Katholikentreffen*) in Dresden and took part, alongside the Protestant Churches, in the assemblies of the Conciliar Process on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation in 1988 and 1989. But in spite of signs of openness the episcopate never joined forces against the state³⁰ and the role of Catholics in what has sometimes been seen as a 'Protestant revolution' remained a minor one.³¹ Indeed, the Catholic Church did not favour reforms of socialism – as did opposition groups associated with the Protestant Churches – nor did it expect an eventual reunification of the two Germanies.³² The unexpected implosion of the East German state means that it must remain uncertain whether the episcopacy as a whole would have begun to engage in a wider public debate. In the following section I will turn to the unexpected socio-political situation and attempt to outline the episcopate's reaction and rhetoric in the face of charge.

Unification and Political Activism

The Ecclesiastical Revolution

If we are to rely on our own strength alone, then this task might seem too great for us. But with God's help, which we pray for every day, we shall be able to obtain the courage to assume our responsibilities in the year of the Lord 1990.³³

Whereas the episcopate showed a rather cautious attitude in the 1980s, an 'ecclesiastical Wende' definitely took place in the 1990s. The implosion of the GDR was massively welcomed;³⁴ and the Catholic Church and its members became very active immediately before and after German unification.³⁵ Catholics participated in the boom of associations that marked the first months following the fall of the Berlin Wall.³⁶ In a pastoral letter read on 31 December 1989 in all Catholic churches of the GDR the episcopate had appealed to all Catholics to organise themselves, create associations and make their voices heard.³⁷ It was believed that the rapid creation of Catholic organisations and political commitment would allow Catholics to have a say in the shaping of the new social order.³⁸ After the dismantling of the SED Catholics took part in the 'Round Table' discussions initiated by the Protestant Churches and a considerable number of Catholics held political offices in the 'coalition government' and the first pan-German government. Georg Paul Hefty notices that nowhere else in the postcommunist countries did so many politicians have a church background.³⁹ Catholics, thanks to their immaculate image and track record, were particularly well represented. In the diocese of Dresden-Meißen, for example, Bishop Reinelt states that 'though Catholics made up only 4 per cent of the total population, in 1990 they held some 700 positions in federal, regional and communal institutions'.⁴⁰

How is the Church Establishing its Position?

Catholics were successful in bringing their main concerns to the fore. The episcopate took early steps towards drafting a new East German constitution, though this project was rapidly dropped as German unification became imminent. As after the Second World War Catholics proved to exert a strong and efficient lobby on legislating institutions.³¹ While many Protestants expressed reservations about the FRG and the prevailing church–state relationship there, the Catholic bishops strongly supported the adoption of the West German Basic Law. They spent little time discussing it, but reiterated the value of church rights as guaranteed by the Basic Law in order to maintain and expand their organisational presence in the new Länder. Such rights included the right to levy ‘church tax’, to offer religious education in state schools and chaplaincy in the army, and through their welfare associations, the possibility of influencing social policy as well as providing a wide range of social services. Hans Joachim Meyer, an influential East German layman, commenting on the path followed by his church after unification, once wrote: ‘In the nature of things it is hardly possible for us to integrate ourselves swiftly into the structures of German Catholicism as they have reemerged and developed since the Second World War. ... But when we look around for an alternative course appropriate for us nothing seems to be on offer.’⁴² This line of argumentation, according to which political unification through ‘institutional transfer’ and church integration within the western frame was inexorable, also prevented a serious debate over an eventual expansion of Caritas, the Catholic welfare agency, or its conscious self-limitation.⁴³

The extension of the West German Basic Law to the new Länder was enacted with German unification. It opened up new spheres of influence for churches in the former German Democratic Republic (in schools, universities, hospitals, the army and prisons as well as on radio and television boards). Other law provisions reiterated or indeed strengthened the churches’ position; some of the eastern states’ new constitutions even make explicit reference to churches and their welfare organisations.⁴⁴ Moreover, unification through institutional transfer ensured the participation of organised interests – above all, the two dominant Christian churches – in policy-making and public service provisions, most notably in the field of social policy. Unification thus offered an opportunity for churches to gain a higher profile and thereby to gain influence over the population. In particular, it brought new responsibilities over children’s day-care, counselling, medical care and old people’s homes, which affected a growing number of Christian and non-Christian recipients of those services. By mid-1991 the minority church and its welfare sector, though much smaller in the GDR than its Protestant counterpart, controlled well over one third of all places or beds and personnel in confessional institutions.⁴⁵

Given the expansion of social welfare services, problems such as recruitment of volunteers and employees in religious institutions have become acute. Low levels of church membership in the East – estimated at between 2 and 6 per cent, depending on the region⁴⁶ – have meant difficulties in recruiting new staff members. Questions concerning the church’s capacity to take over formerly state-owned institutions and concerning personnel policy, according to which employees of a church-related institution must be members of a church, were promptly skirted. Institutions that were not labour-intensive and provided a means of gaining influence over the population, such as kindergartens and counselling centres, were particularly favoured. Moreover, new staff members were being recruited among non-Christians, provided that they were in agreement with the principles and goals of the association

and that the chairperson of the institution was a Catholic. The personnel policy was thus conveniently suspended temporarily in order not to hinder a debate that could have jeopardised the agency's legitimacy and institutional position.

In spite of the very small number of Catholic pupils, the Catholic Church particularly stressed the fact that religious instruction should be enshrined – as in the Basic Law – in the new regional constitutions. Although the two big Christian Churches now have the opportunity to provide religious instruction in most new federal states, Catholic instruction does not generally take place in school. Because of the small number of pupils and teachers, instruction recognised by the school authorities often takes place in the parish. Moreover, the parliament of Brandenburg, one of the five new German states, has to the church's great displeasure introduced LER (*'Lebensgestaltung, Ethik, Religion'*), a subject to replace traditional religious education in state schools. Priests have refused to participate in the teaching of the new subject and Catholics brought a case to the Federal Court of Justice on the grounds that it violated the provision for religious education. This example clearly shows how the church, as Spieker rightly states, 'is marshalling its limited resources in order to secure itself a presence in society'.⁴⁷

The Catholic organisations expended a great deal of energy in order to sustain their existing rights and to obtain both new rights and new institutions, with the aim of maintaining and expanding their activities in the former GDR. The church has thus favoured a 'logic of influence'. With the support of its sister organisation in the West, the small Catholic Church in the new German states has adapted its structures to the western model. While the Protestant Churches' attitudes and actions have been more of a 'wait-and-see' kind, the Catholic Church has sought a 'niche' in sectors financed by the state and taken opportunities to attract people.⁴⁸ The former political frontier, where the state confers, delegates or limits rights and competencies, has thus proved favourable to church intervention; but the confessional frontier, the number of church-affiliated people, might turn out to be problematic. Indeed, the very willingness of parliamentarians to make reference to religion in law illustrates, on the one hand, a favourable reception of the idea of church involvement, but, on the other hand, an acknowledgement of the churches' precarious situation. Indeed, low church membership and shortage of personnel might in the long run question the legitimacy of 'historic religions'⁴⁹ in Germany and, in turn, their institutional rights.

How does the Church Legitimise its Position?

Since unification the Catholic Church has fought for its vested interests while avoiding wide public debate. This has involved a transition from political abstinence – an attitude promoting the separation of church and state – to political activism and partnership with the state (in providing, for instance, religious instruction, chaplaincy in public institutions, social welfare services and media services). The presence of Catholics in politics, administration, schools and universities, after a long 'political hibernation',⁵⁰ has also entailed a shift from episcopal to lay involvement; a change argued for through the rhetoric of Catholic social doctrine: '... the hoped-for contribution by Catholic social doctrine to the stabilisation of democracy, the market economy and civil society, culminating in a call to the laity to fulfil their task in the world, which is to enable this social doctrine to bind together faith, professional skill and political responsibility'.⁵¹ The implosion of the East German state was accompanied by a 'Wende' within the church, although, as Richter rightly points out, the members of the episcopacy would probably not use this terminology.⁵²

In their pastoral letters issued between the fall of the Berlin Wall and unification, the bishops focus on the continuity of actions and attitude.⁵³ In a much-expected public declaration (31 December 1989) on the position of the Catholic Church in the GDR and its role in political turmoil the primates explain:

The same principles determine our past and our current behaviour. In the past, they made us take a clear position of refusal in relation to the power claims of the socialist state under SED control and limit our relations to discussions on particular topics when it was absolutely necessary. Today, in view of the development toward a democratic and open society, we are required to commit ourselves to cooperation.⁵⁴

The bishops here commend participation in public affairs on the part of churches and Christians; but during the history of the GDR the latter were denied public involvement. The transition from the GDR to the FRG has not been characterised by continuity in the East. As Richter comments: 'only the bishops could get in contact with state and society. The flock had to keep a low profile and priests were to report any contacts with state or local officials.'⁵⁵ The pastoral letter read on New Year's Eve 1989 was received with much disappointment by the Catholics who expected from their bishops a clear position on the current political and social change.⁵⁶ No effort was made to justify the Catholic Church's past silence, nor was the role of Protestants in the Peaceful Revolution acknowledged. Not surprisingly, a large number of Protestants and members of the opposition groups were irritated by the declaration, a reaction epitomised in the caustic remark 'we brought about the revolution; the Catholics are now reaping the benefits',⁵⁷ a comment which echoes that of Kurt Schumacher who in the aftermath of the Second World War labelled the Catholic Church 'the fifth Occupying Power'. Although most German church leaders and politicians are generally eager to stress ecumenical cooperation, tensions between the churches are at times rekindled.

Although Georg Sterzinsky, archbishop of Berlin, expressed regrets during the last synod of the Federation of Protestant Churches in the GDR that Catholics had not been more supportive of the Protestant Churches and the opposition groups, the East German bishops have generally stressed the positive role their church played in the political turmoil. They also emphasise Catholic social involvement in the last years of the GDR and their cooperation with the Protestant Churches in the Conciliar Process on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation. Lastly, Joachim Wanke, the bishop who had been calling for a greater Catholic participation in social life (as in his 1981 lecture *Versuch einer pastoralen Standortbestimmung*), is remembered as an important figure.

Conclusion

Although the Catholic Church in the new Länder today is not as important as it was in the FRG, it still plays a major role; and given their minority status in the former GDR Catholics are overrepresented in official positions. The preservation and homogeneity of a Catholic social milieu ensured them a strong institutional presence. It is also worth noting that the nature of unification, and the emerging parliamentary constellations headed by the Christian Democrats (CDU) at the outset of the 1990s, turned out to be favourable to the Catholic Church. Moreover, I have shown that Bengsch's legacy left Catholics politically untarnished, while at the same time they went on to benefit from the positive role that the Protestant Churches had played in

the Peaceful Revolution. As one of unification's 'victorious institutions',⁵⁸ the Catholic Church also benefited from a 'rente de situation': unlike other organisations, it could rely on the West and an existing network of institutions on the territory of the former GDR. The church was an independent organisation and its dioceses had been maintained; and Caritas, although its capacity was minor in comparison with that of the state sector, could nonetheless expand on these institutions.⁵⁹ In fact, despite its demographic marginality and minority profile, Catholicism was already present in all parts of the GDR.⁶⁰ Unification through 'transfer of institutions' thus endowed Catholics with a privileged position over other intermediary organisations.

Since the Hohenzollern Empire, Catholics have been well organised and have played an influential role in shaping the modern German welfare state.⁶¹ In contrast to the postwar period, however, the 1990s are characterised neither by Catholic majorities in populations and parliaments nor by religious revival. I have shown that, faced with this situation, the Catholic Church promoted the expansion of the Basic Law to the newly formed states and upheld a 'logic of influence' rather than 'logic of membership', thus avoiding any challenge to its institutional position. Whereas the Protestant Churches have spent a lot of time discussing their new place in society, the Catholic Church and Caritas, its social agency, quickly favoured the western model and consequently adapted their organisational structures. The hierarchical structure of the organisation allowed a quick repositioning while the episcopate's rhetoric stressed continuity. As Patrick Michel points out,

these misunderstandings [with regard to the discourse of the churches] are, all things considered, necessary. Religious language has characteristically great polysemy; more than any other, it is capable to say what it does not say at all. The more the need to clarify these misunderstandings grows, the more the influence of the church, as an administrative institution of bonding and autonomy and as a self-proclaimed depository of religious legitimacy, will be weak.⁶²

Notes and References

- ¹ Today less than 30 per cent of the population of the new states is affiliated with a church – 3 per cent Catholic and 25 per cent Protestant. These figures contrast sharply with church membership in the West, which is estimated at some 80 per cent – the percentage of Catholics being slightly higher than that of Protestants (see Detlef Pollack, 'Im Land der Konfessionslosen: Lage der evangelischen Kirchen in Ostdeutschland', *Hirschberg*, vol. 50, no. 6, 1997, p. 395).
- ² On Catholicism in minority situations see David Martin, *A General Theory of Secularization* (Blackwell, Oxford, 1978), pp. 24–25, and Martin Dillon, *God and the Gun: The Church and Irish Terrorism* (Routledge, London, 1997), p. 161.
- ³ Klemens Richter, 'Die achtziger Jahre – eine neue Phase im DDR-Katholizismus', *Deutschland Archiv*, vol. 22, no. 11, 1989, p. 1238.
- ⁴ Unification through Article 23 paved the way for constitutional continuity and avoided the drafting of a new constitution as foreseen in Article 146. See Reinhold Zippelius, *Kleine deutsche Verfassungsgeschichte: Vom frühen Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart* (Beck, München, 1994), p. 188.
- ⁵ Ehrhart Neubert quoted in Gerhard Lange, 'Politische Gemeinsamkeiten zwischen der katholischen und den evangelischen Kirchen in der DDR', in Gert Kaiser and Ewald Frie (eds), *Christen, Staat, und Gesellschaft in der DDR* (Campus, Frankfurt am Main, 1996), p. 96.
- ⁶ Caritas, the Catholic welfare agency, is the largest church-related organisation as well as

the largest private welfare association in Germany. The institutionalised charitable work of the East German churches was a phenomenon unique in Central and Eastern Europe: 'Zwischen der Elbe und Wladiwostok gibt es nur bei uns eine organisierte kirchliche Caritas' (Cardinal Bengsch quoted in Gerhard Lange and Ursula Pruß, 'Caritas in der ehemaligen DDR', *Caritas Jahrbuch* 97, 1996, p. 42). Offe refers to the relationship between churches and their welfare organisations as 'verbandskolonialistische Verhältnisse' – that is, as a colonial relationship. Claus Offe, 'Das pluralistische System von organisierten Interessen', in Heinz Josef Varain (ed.), *Interessenverbände in Deutschland* (Kiepenheuer & Witsch, Köln, 1973), p. 370. Indeed, it is through their welfare agency that the ecclesiastical actors regulate believers and service recipients on a day-to-day basis.

⁷ Friedhelm Jostmeier, 'Die "Hoffnungstaler Anstalten" in Lobetal – letzte "Insel im roten Meer"?' in Kaiser and Frie (eds), *op. cit.*, pp. 177–221; Barbara Thériault, 'A land of opportunity? Ecclesiastical strategies and social regulation in the new German Länder', *Journal of Church and State*, vol. 40, no. 3, 1998, pp. 603–18.

⁸ The religious policies of the SED focused heavily on the Protestant Churches as does most research on religious organisations in the GDR. The study of the Catholic Church can provide us with 'an alternative model for internal structuring of the church and for dealing with the communist state' (Robert F. Goeckel, 'The Catholic Church in East Germany', in Pedro Ramet (ed.), *Catholicism and Politics in Communist Societies* (Duke University Press, Durham, 1990), p. 93.

⁹ Joachim Wanke, *Last und Chance des Christseins: Akzente eines Weges* (Benno, Leipzig, 1992), p. 59.

¹⁰ Josef Pilvousek, 'Die Katholische Kirche in der DDR', in Horst Dähn (ed.), *Die Rolle der Kirchen in der DDR: Eine erste Bilanz* (Olzog, München, 1993), p. 58.

¹¹ Wolfgang Knauff, *Katholische Kirche in der DDR: Gemeinde in der Bewährung 1945–1980* (Grünewald, Mainz, 1980), p. 26.

¹² Pilvousek, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

¹³ *ibid.*, p. 56.

¹⁴ Most of the episcopate's public statements have been collected and published (see Gerhard Lange *et al.*, *Katholische Kirche – Sozialistischer Staat der DDR: Dokumente und öffentliche Äußerungen 1945–1990* (Benno, Leipzig, 1993); Josef Pilvousek (ed.), *Kirchliches Leben im totalitären Staat: Seelsorge in der SBZ/DDR 1977–1989, Quellentexte aus den Ordinariaten* (Benno, Leipzig, 1998); Josef Pilvousek (ed.), *Kirchlichen Leben im totalitären Staat: Seelsorge in der SBZ/DDR 1945–1976, Quellentexte aus den Ordinariaten* (Benno, Leipzig, 1994); Martin Höllen, *Loyale Distanz? Katholizismus und der Kirchenpolitik in SBZ und DDR: Ein historischer Überblick in Dokumenten* (Höllens, Berlin, 1994, 1997 and 1998).

¹⁵ Ute Haese, *Katholische Kirche in der DDR: Geschichte einer politischen Abstinenz* (Patmos, Düsseldorf, 1998), p. 237.

¹⁶ Criticisms offered by laymen and the Aktionskreis Halle (AKH), a forum composed of laymen, were disregarded. For more details, see *ibid.*, pp. 213–22.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 41. New archival material shows that the Catholic Church did in some cases maintain contacts with the Ministry for State Security (MfS) and local authorities (see Dieter Grande and Bernd Schäfer, *Kirche im Visier: SED, Staatssicherheit und Katholische Kirche in der DDR* (Leipzig, 1998); Ute Haese, 'MfS-Kontakte auf offizieller Ebene', in Clemens Vollnhals (ed.), *Die Kirchenpolitik von SED und Staatssicherheit: Eine Zwischenbilanz* (Berlin, 1996), pp. 371–87, and *id.*, 'Katholische Kirche in der DDR und MfS', *Deutschland Archiv*, vol. 27, no. 2, 1994, pp. 130–40.

¹⁸ Catholic welfare institutions did receive compensation for services provided in stationary institutions (such as hospitals as well as homes for the old and the handicapped). They did not, however, obtain such financial support for children's education, a domain exclusively under the auspices of the SED. Ursula Pruß, 'Caritas in der DDR', in Dähn (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 198–212.

¹⁹ The Protestant Churches had theological faculties in state universities.

- ²⁰ Haese, *Katholische Kirche in der DDR ...*, p. 8; Goeckel, *op. cit.*, p. 114.
- ²¹ Though the integrity of the dioceses was maintained, modifications were nevertheless made. A regional conference was set up and bishopric bureaux were created in Schwerin, Madgeburg, Erfurt and Görlitz.
- ²² Pilvousek, 'Die Katholische Kirche ...', p. 71.
- ²³ Lange and Pruß, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
- ²⁴ Martin Höllen, 'Die Katholische Kirche in der DDR', in Werner Weidenfeld and Hartmut Zimmermann (eds), *Deutschland Handbuch: Eine doppelte Bilanz* (Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, Düsseldorf, 1989), p. 179.
- ²⁵ Pilvousek, *Kirchliches Leben ...* (1998); Goeckel, *op. cit.*, pp. 110–12.
- ²⁶ Pilvousek, *Kirchliches Leben ...* (1998), p. 25.
- ²⁷ Wanke, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
- ²⁸ The bishops avoided referring directly to the East German state. Instead, they used 'apolitical' synonyms, such as in Wanke's statement: 'Wir wollen auch hierher gehören, nicht, weil wir nicht anders können, sondern weil wir um dieses Landes willen, um seiner Menschen willen einen Weg suchen wollen, um das Evangelium Jesu Christi auf 'mitteldeutsch' zu buchstabieren', *ibid.*, p. 13.
- ²⁹ For the church's statements, see Lange *et al.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 292–93 and 318–20.
- ³⁰ Apart from a short period of time in the aftermath of the Second World War the Catholic and Protestant Churches demonstrated diverging strategies in dealing with the state. However, they did cooperate on some issues through their more pragmatic social agencies.
- ³¹ Ehrhart Neubert, 'Eine protestantische Revolution', *Deutschland Archiv*, vol. 23, no. 5, 1990, pp. 704–13.
- ³² Haese, *Katholische Kirche in der DDR ...*, p. 177.
- ³³ Lange *et al.*, *op. cit.*, p. 395.
- ³⁴ 'Bundesrepublik/DDR: Die Kirchen auf dem Weg zur Einheit', *Herder-Korrespondenz*, vol. 44, 1990, pp. 157–58.
- ³⁵ Karl-Fritz Daiber, *Religion unter den Bedingungen der Moderne: Die Situation in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Diagonal, Marburg, 1995), p. 108; and Siegfried Schnauß, 'Die Katholische Soziale Aktion', in Andreas Dornheim and Stephan Schnitzler (eds), *Thüringen 1989/ 1990: Akteure des Umbruchs berichten* (Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, Erfurt, 1995), pp. 243–52.
- ³⁶ Annette Zimmer and Eckhard Priller, 'Intermediäre Organisationen in den neuen Bundesländern: Der Nonprofit-Sektor in Ostdeutschland', in Wolfgang Seibel (ed.), *Berichtsgruppe 111 Politische Interessenvermittlung, Kommunal- und Verwaltungspolitik* (KSPW, Berlin, 1996), pp. 202–300.
- ³⁷ For a reproduction of the text, see Lange *et al.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 393–95.
- ³⁸ Jürgen Kiowski, 'Chancen und Grenzen christlicher Sozialverbände in der ehemaligen DDR', in Manfred Spieker (ed.), *Vom Sozialismus zum demokratischen Rechtsstaat* (Schöningh, Paderborn, 1992), p. 152.
- ³⁹ Georg-Paul Hefty, 'Berufsparlamentarier wider Willen', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 November 1997, p. 16.
- ⁴⁰ Joachim Reinelt, 'Kirche und Gesellschaft in den neuen Bundesländern nach der Wende', in Manfred Spieker (ed.), *Nach der Wende: Kirche und Gesellschaft in Polen und Ostdeutschland: Sozialethische Probleme der Transformationsprozesse* (Paderborn, 1995), p. 53.
- ⁴¹ Barbara Thériault, 'Die "Professional guardians of the sacred" und die deutsche Verfassunggebung', in Detlef Pollack and Gert Pickel (eds), *Religiöser und Kirchlicher Wandel in Ostdeutschland 1989–1999* (Leske & Budrich, Opladen, 2000), pp. 186–205; and Winfried Weinrich, *Wie sind die neuen Länder verfaßt? Die Verfassungen in den neuen Bundesländern*, paper presented at the Catholic Student Community in Ilmenau, 30 May 1995.
- ⁴² Hans Joachim Meyer, 'Der Wandel kirchlicher Aufgaben in der ehemaligen DDR', in Spieker (ed.), *Sozialismus ...*, p. 172.

- ⁴³ 'Caritas: Herausforderungen durch die neuen Bundesländer', *Herder-Korrespondenz*, vol. 45, 1991, p. 111.
- ⁴⁴ The special status of welfare associations as service providers is established in Article 32 of the Unification Treaty. The constitutions of some of the new federal states even envisioned the place of charitable work of churches and religious groups and their right to compensation for their expenses. In some cases, allusions to God are also made in the preambles to constitutions of these new states.
- ⁴⁵ Thériault, 'A land of opportunity? ...'
- ⁴⁶ Hellmut Puschmann, 'Zum Leitbild-prozeß des Deutschen Caritasverbandes', *Caritas Jahrbuch 97*, 1996, p. 106.
- ⁴⁷ Spieker (ed.), *Nach der Wende ...*, p. 22.
- ⁴⁸ As Klemens Richter sums up, 'die evangelischen Kirchen zur Zeit noch verstärkt mit der Gesellschaft befassten, während die römische-katholische Kirche – Beispielsweise im Blick auf das Bildungswesen (Konfessionsschulen, etc.) – bereits nach ihrer Rolle in der neuen Gesellschaft fragt' (Klemens Richter, 'Die DDR-Katholiken nach der Wende', *Deutschland Archiv*, vol. 22, no. 10, 1990, p. 1597). Moreover, it is worth noting that Catholics did not have to deal – at least not to the same extent as the Protestants – with issues concerning collaboration with the secret police.
- ⁴⁹ Robert N. Bellah, 'Religious evolution', in Schmuehl N. Eisenstadt (ed.), *Readings in Social Evolution and Development* (Pergamon, Oxford, 1970).
- ⁵⁰ Goeckel, *op. cit.*, p. 114.
- ⁵¹ Bernhard Sutor, 'Wandlungsprozesse in Polen und Ostdeutschland', *Stimme der Zeit*, vol. 120, no. 214, 1996, p. 213.
- ⁵² Richter, *op. cit.*, p. 1240.
- ⁵³ See Lange *et al.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 362–413.
- ⁵⁴ *ibid.*, p. 393.
- ⁵⁵ Richter, *op. cit.*, p. 1249.
- ⁵⁶ 'Suchbewegungen: Ein magerer Hirtenbrief und die Selbstorganisation katholischer Laien in der DDR', *Herder-Korrespondenz*, vol. 44, 1990, pp. 54–55.
- ⁵⁷ Victor Conzemius, 'Protestants and Catholics in the German Democratic Republic, 1945–1990', *Religion State and Society*, vol. 26, no. 1, 1998, p. 55.
- ⁵⁸ Detlef Pollack, 'Bleiben sie Heiden? Religiös-kirchliche Einstellungen und Verhaltensweisen der Ostdeutschen nach dem Umbruch von 1989', in Detlef Pollack, Irena Borowik and Wolfgang Jagodzinski (eds), *Religiöser Wandel in den postkommunistischen Ländern Ost- und Mitteleuropas* (Ergon, Würzburg, 1998), p. 246.
- ⁵⁹ Helmut K. Anheier and Eckhard Priller, 'The non-profit sector in East Germany before and after unification', *Voluntas*, vol. 2, no. 1, 1991, pp. 78–95.
- ⁶⁰ Wanke writes 'nur wenige Menschen werden die Schwelle zur Kirchlichkeit überschreiten. Vielleicht ist es gar nicht so wichtig, daß alle zur verfaßten Kirche gehören. Sie hat immer nur Stellvertreterfunktion gehabt', in Richter, 'Die DDR-Katholiken ...', p. 1603.
- ⁶¹ Jochen-Christoph Kaiser, 'Von der christlichen Liebestätigkeit zur freien Wohlfahrtspflege: Zur Genese und Organisation konfessionellen Sozialengagements in der Weimarer Republik', in Thomas Rauschenbach, Christoph Sachße and Thomas Olk (eds), *Von der Wertgemeinschaft zum Dienstleistungsunternehmen: Jugend- und Wohlfahrtsverbände im Umbruch* (Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1995), p. 172.
- ⁶² Patrick Michel, 'Religion, communism and democracy in Central Europe: the Polish case', in William H. Swatos Jr. (ed.), *Politics and Religion in Central and Eastern Europe: Traditions and Transitions* (Praeger, Westport, 1994), p. 123.