

students. I surmise that Cambridge University Press published it without having it carefully reviewed by historians who were specialists in Korean Christianity. There are several historians in Korea and around the world who would have been more than qualified to comment on this manuscript before it was published. I do not understand why a prestigious publisher like Cambridge University Press failed to contact them.

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*Die katholische Kirche in der DDR. Beiträge zur Kirchengeschichte Mitteldeutschlands.*

By Josef Pilvousek. Pp. 457. Münster: Aschendorff, 2014. €39.80 (paper).  
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Catholics in the German Democratic Republic survived life in a ‘double diaspora’, an almost ghetto-like existence as a minority among a Christian minority. Eastern Germany, or central Germany in Pilvousek’s worldview, was the epicentre of the Lutheran Reformation. The author, an ordained priest and retired professor, has brought together in this volume twenty-six previously published articles covering six areas of research. There is nothing here on Catholics coming to terms with the Nazi past and involvement in the holocaust. The focus of the first section is on Catholic work with refugees in Thuringia in the period 1943 to 1949. Eight biographical studies of key Catholic figures are gathered in the second section. Two articles on pilgrimages in honour of St Elisabeth of Thuringia follow. The remaining sections deal with Church life in the GDR, the reception of the Second Vatican Council and the specific Catholic response to political and constitutional developments after 1949, including the peaceful revolution of 1989. Strong regional identities led to resistance to ecclesiastical reunification in 1990. The struggles against the youth dedication rite and the abortion law (battles that the small Catholic Church lost) are discussed. Catholic bishops had nothing positive to say about the GDR (p. 429), it appears. The GDR is at times described as a totalitarian (with and without quotation marks) and sometimes as an authoritarian state. Yet its supposedly ‘atheistic’ government provided financial and other support to church bodies. By means of informers the SED gained many insights into Catholic thinking. Karl Fischer was one of these colourful characters, a man dropped like a hot potato by Church and SED once his sexual misdemeanours came to light. The focus of the book is, inevitably, on Thuringia and the ‘Silesian’ bishops who controlled ecclesiastical affairs. There is much overlap between the articles; rather annoyingly, many paragraphs are repeated verbatim. A list of abbreviations, indices of names and places and some explanation of the many technical terms would have made this book more accessible.

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