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The Americanization of Walther's Doctrine of the Church.....	John C. Wohlrabe, Jr. 1
The Smalcald Articles as a Systematic Theology: A Comparison with the Augsburg Confession.....	H.P. Hamann 29
Six Theses on Liturgy and Evangelism.....	John T. Pless 41
A Review Article: Dogmatik des Christlichen Glaubens.....	Lowell C. Green 53
Book Reviews.....	61
Indices to Volume 51 (1987)	
Author Index.....	63
Title Index.....	67
Scripture Index to the Homiletical Studies.....	69
Subject Index.....	71



The Americanization of Walther's Doctrine of the Church

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Before delving into the nature of Walther's doctrine of the church itself, we should first attempt to characterize Americanization in American religious life, and this is not an easy task.¹ It involves separating specific religious beliefs from cultural influences within a religious group and then showing how cultural influences have affected or shaped the beliefs or practices of that group as they adapted to life in the United States. Simply defined, Americanization is the act of "being Americanized." To Americanize is "to make or become American in character, manners, methods, ideals, etc.; assimilate to United States customs, speech, etc."² Yet, for our purposes this definition is too broad or general in that it does not describe the nature of the phenomenon specifically with respect to American religious life. I believe that five different types of Americanization may be noted within denominations or faith groups in America or within American religious life as a whole. These categories are not firm. In other words, there is a certain amount of overlap. However, I found these categories helpful in trying to characterize the nature of Americanization in connection with this study.

The first, and most common, form of Americanization is that displayed in the case of an individual or group of people sharing the same religious and cultural background who came to the United States in order to take advantage of the freedom of religion afforded under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, or provided in certain colonies before the Revolutionary War. Included in this category would be the Saxon Lutherans who arrived in Missouri in 1839 and who are the primary focus of this study.³

A second type of Americanization is the adapting or changing of church doctrine or practice to conform to the American environment, because of influence or pressures from other American citizens outside of the specific faith group, or because of certain governmental laws or regulations.⁴ Into this category might be placed the Halfway Covenant of New England Congregationalists,⁵ the establishment of the Protestant Episcopal Church because of the Revolutionary War,⁶ the two Great

Awakenings including the New Lights and the New Measures,⁷ the “Americanism” Crisis in the Roman Catholic Church during the last two decades of the nineteenth century,⁸ the rise of Reform Judaism in America,⁹ and the transition to the English language from their native tongue on the part of numerous immigrant groups either by way of acculturation or because of antilanguage legislation.¹⁰

A third form of Americanization takes place within American religious life as a whole. It is the institutionalized civil religion identified by Robert Bellah.¹¹ Although growing out of a cultural background dominated by Protestantism and by the Enlightenment, this generic religion of the United States can be found in presidential addresses, in statements on U.S. currency, and in the viewpoint that God is on “our” side in times of war.

Still a fourth form of Americanization was noted by John Murray Cuddihy as a religion that strives to be civil and inoffensive. Whereas Bellah’s civil religion is differentiated from the various denominations, Cuddihy’s “religion that is civil” takes place within the various faith groups in America. It is a religion of tolerance.¹² Within Protestantism, this is specifically identified with Reinhold Niebuhr;¹³ within Roman Catholicism it is noted in the work of John Courtney Murray, S.J.;¹⁴ and within Judaism it is identified with Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg.¹⁵ Although not observed by Cuddihy, one may also consider the work of Samuel Schmucker and his attempt at establishing an “American Lutheranism” in terms of this category.¹⁶

Finally, a fifth form of Americanization is the formation of indigenous American religious groups. This category would include the Disciples of Christ, the Mormons, the Adventists, the Jehovah’s Witnesses, the Christian Scientists, Pentecostal groups, and many others.¹⁷

With these five categories of Americanization in mind, it will be noted that the development of Walther’s doctrine of the church falls only within the first category. In the face of a crisis that confronted the Saxon immigrants of Missouri, a crisis which had actually been developing before they came to America, Walther took advantage of the freedom of religion afforded within the United States. His doctrine of the church was not drawn from his new American cultural environment, but from Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, Martin Luther, and other noted church

fathers. Of special importance is that here a distinction is to be made between the doctrine of the church and church polity or church government.

*Walther and the Saxon Immigration:
The Doctrine of the Church Takes Shape*

During the early nineteenth century, German Lutherans who emigrated to the United States, with its pluralistic and voluntaristic religious culture, faced an ecclesiological dilemma. In the fatherland they were accustomed to the well established and regulated consistorial form of state church polity as set forth in the centuries old *Kirchenordnungen*.¹⁸ The pastor was a representative of both the state and the church. He was placed in a congregation by the *collator*, a member of the landed aristocracy, or his appointed *consistorium*. Thus, the pastor was responsible first and foremost to the state and not to his own appointed congregation. The congregation had little, if any, voice in the call of its pastor.¹⁹

Because of the close association between church and state, and because the pastor was appointed by representatives of the state, more emphasis was placed on the ministry than on the church. Some German Lutheran theologians believed that society was divided into a threefold order (*Stände*): the governmental authorities, the public office of the ministry, and the family. The public office of the ministry, or the *Predigerstand*, was a divinely instituted order in society, separate from the order of the government and family. One entered the *Stand* of the ministry through the call to the office (*Amt*). However, this call was not possessed by the church. It came from God through the governing authorities.²⁰ This understanding not only combined church and state, but it also linked the doctrine of the church with church polity or government in the minds of many.

C.F.W. Walther's understanding of the doctrine of the church and of the separation of the doctrine of the church from church polity, which eventually became the position of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, developed out of the experiences of a group of Saxon emigrants who followed a Dresden pastor named Martin Stephan to St. Louis and the wilderness of Perry County, Missouri.²¹ In the fall of 1838 about 700 Lutherans from various parts of Saxony departed Bremerhaven in five small sailing vessels. The immigration included five pastors, ten theological candidates and four teachers, all closely attached to their leader. Among this

group were Pastor C.F.W. Walther and his older brother, Otto Herman. They were fleeing Germany because they believed that they were being persecuted by the governing authorities. Their leader, Martin Stephan, had been imprisoned twice and was under suspicion for late night church gatherings and for taking nocturnal walks with young ladies. Because Stephan's followers viewed this as persecution, they decided to leave Saxony. They saw in the United States a land where they could exercise their religion freely.²²

Prior to their departure, extensive plans had been made and a *Gesellschaft* (emigration company) was formed.²³ It was determined that the ecclesiastical structure of the colony would be strictly hierarchical.²⁴ Plans for a semiautonomous theocratic community were laid out in a comprehensive set of emigration codes. Power was to be divided between the clergy and a privileged wealthy class of laymen, with the balance of power lying predominantly with the clergy. Within this ministerium, the final authority was to rest with "the primate" or "first divine," Martin Stephan.²⁵

It was on board the sailing ship *Olbers*, on January 14, 1839, that Martin Stephan was officially declared "bishop" through the signing of a document called "Stephan's Investiture." The document, eventually signed by all the pastors and influential laymen, including Pastor C.F.W. Walther, not only made Stephan bishop, but also declared that they were transplanting the Lutheran Church from Germany to the United States.²⁶ On February 16, 1839, aboard the riverboat *Selma* between New Orleans and St. Louis, the "Pledge of Subjection to Stephan" was endorsed. This document gave the "bishop" control over both the ecclesiastical and temporal affairs of the immigrants.²⁷

Only a few months after their arrival in Missouri, the Saxon immigrants deposed and excommunicated their "bishop" for apparent immorality.²⁸ What followed were confessions of guilt,²⁹ the resignation of some pastorates, including that of C.F.W. Walther,³⁰ and persistent questions on the part of the people: Had they been wrong in their allegiance to Stephan? Was the emigration a sinful act on their part? Were they a church? Did their pastors have valid calls? Did their clergy have the authority to function? Were the official acts performed by the clergy valid?³¹

A lawyer and influential layman among the Saxon immigrants, Carl Vehse, came forward with a set of six propositions that offered a solution to the problems which beset the colony. These

propositions were submitted to Pastor O.H. Walther on August 5, 1839. Here Vehse asserted the Lutheran doctrine of the universal priesthood of all believers. He argued that the office of the ministry is only a public service and, only when it is committed to an individual by a congregation, is it valid.³² To this assertion the clergy responded by warning the members of the St. Louis congregation against those "who would unfairly abuse this declaration in order to discredit our office, maliciously sow the seeds of distrust against us, and bring about dissension and offense in the congregation."³³ Vehse and two other laymen responded, on September 19, 1839, with a formal, detailed protest that consisted of three chapters.³⁴ This protest maintained a firm juxtaposition of laity and clergy, strenuously asserted the rights of the congregation as opposed to those of the clergy, and assumed the supremacy of the congregation. Vehse and his two supporters also came to the conclusion that the emigration was wrong from the start and urged that everyone return to Germany.³⁵

Most of the colonists were not prepared to accept the solution offered by Vehse, least of all the clergy.³⁶ The departure of Vehse on December 16, 1839, marked the end of the first major period of crisis which followed the expulsion of Stephan. However, Vehse's protests were soon replaced by those of Franz Adolph Marbach, Vehse's brother-in-law. There were others who shared Marbach's views. However, Marbach was the leading spokesman for the lay party in attempting to find a solution to the problems which plagued the colony. On March 3, 1841, Marbach issued a manifesto in which he maintained that the entire foundation on which their church polity had been erected was sinful and that the blessings of God could not be expected until they repented and returned to Germany.³⁷ Shortly after Marbach issued his manifesto, a conference was held in Dresden, Perry County, Missouri, including Pastors Loeber, Keyl, Gruber, and Buerger, Candidate Brohm, Magister Wege, and Marbach. Little was settled at this meeting and it appeared that the situation was deteriorating quickly. Carl S. Mundinger provided the following analysis:

Evidences of accelerated disintegration were piling up on all sides. At the end of March 1841 the whole colony was fast approaching a state of complete disintegration. The spirit and influence of the clerics seems to have reached its lowest mark. Something had to be done and that something had to be drastic and dramatic.³⁸

A public debate was arranged for April 15 and 21, 1841, in Perry County, Missouri.³⁹ The site chosen for the disputation was the log cabin college which had been founded by the Saxons on December 9, 1839, in Altenburg. On the whole, the debate, chiefly between C.F.W. Walther and Franz Adolph Marbach, was a relatively calm theological discussion.⁴⁰ Marbach offered basically the same solution he had proposed in his manifesto. He saw the problem as simply a moral issue.⁴¹

In order to solve the problems of the colony, Walther tried to push personality and morals into the background and attack this issue from the viewpoint of sixteenth-century Lutheran theology. The questions for Walther were not ones of guilt and confession, but of the nature of the church.⁴² Walther set forth a series of propositions that have become known as the *Altenburg Theses*. These theses set forth the understanding of the doctrine of the church that Walther would hold throughout the remainder of his life:

I.

The true church, in the most real and most perfect sense, is the totality (*Gesamtheit*) of all true believers, who from the beginning to the end of the world from among all peoples and tongues have been called and sanctified by the Holy Spirit through the Word. And since God alone knows these true believers (2 Tim. 2:19), the church is also called invisible. No one belongs to this true church who is not spiritually united with Christ, for it is the spiritual body of Jesus Christ.

II.

The name of the true church belongs also to all those visible companies of men among whom God's Word is purely taught and the holy Sacraments are administered according to the institution of Christ. True, in this church there are godless men, hypocrites, and heretics, but they are not true members of it, nor do they constitute the church.

III.

The name "church," and, in a certain sense, the name "true church," belongs also to those visible companies of men who have united under the confession of a falsified faith and therefore have incurred the guilt of a partial departure from the truth, provided they possess so much of God's Word and the holy sacraments in purity that children of God may thereby

be born. When such companies are called true churches, it is not the intention to state that they are faithful, but only that they are real churches as opposed to all worldly organizations (*Gemeinschaften*).

IV.

The name "church" is not improperly applied to heterodox companies, but according to the manner of speech of the Word of God itself. It is also not immaterial that this high name is allowed to such communions, for out of this follows:

1. That members also of such companies may be saved; for without the church there is no salvation.

V.

2. The outward separation of a heterodox company from an orthodox church is not necessarily a separation from the universal Christian Church nor a relapse into heathenism and does not yet deprive that company of the name "church."

VI.

3. Even heterodox companies have church power; even among them the goods of the church may be validly administered, the ministry established, the sacraments validly administered, and the keys of the kingdom of heaven exercised.

VII.

4. Even heterodox companies are not to be dissolved, but reformed.

VIII.

The orthodox church is chiefly to be judged by the common, orthodox, public confession to which its members acknowledge and confess themselves to be pledged.⁴³

In his *Altenburg Theses*, Walther showed that the colonists were indeed members of the true church and that they could function as the church. He based his conclusions on the teaching of Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions (particularly Augustana VII), Martin Luther, and other prominent Lutheran theologians.⁴⁴ In the notes which Walther prepared for the debate, he acknowledged his indebtedness to Vehse.⁴⁵ However, Walther did not adopt the same line of argumentation which Vehse used. Vehse had advocated extreme congregationalism, had combined church polity with his understanding of the church, and had leveled his attack on the

members of the clergy. Walther started with the same premise as Vehse, the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, but his aim was constructive rather than destructive. Walter O. Forster gave the following analysis:

It was vital to remember, furthermore, that belonging to an organized church body did not constitute one a Christian, but that a body of Christians could organize at any time to constitute a church. "A church," the word which seemed to have become the shibboleth of the controversy—"a church" was still extant among them. If this were so, they must possess all the rights of such a body and could exercise all its functions; specifically, they could call pastors and teachers and provide for the administration of the sacraments and other rites normally connected with the existence of an organized congregation, of "a church." In practical application it meant the identification of the characteristics and powers of a congregation and "*the church*."⁴⁶

Walther's doctrine of the church was distinctive in that it separated the understanding of the true nature of the church from church polity. Because of the freedom of religion afforded in the United States, Walther had the liberty to separate doctrine and polity. The occasion that precipitated this development was not so much the American environment, but rather a struggle amongst the Saxon immigrants themselves. It must also be remembered that these immigrants, and the church body they would help establish in 1847, remained a German enclave until after World War I.⁴⁷

The *Altenburg Theses* were not the fullest expression of Walther's understanding of the doctrine of the church. This development would come later through another controversy that was already developing at this time. Yet the propositions established and accepted by all at Altenburg had a profound effect on the Saxon colony. Out of the confusion and chaos which had characterized the thinking and actions of the colonists, Walther had set forth an acceptable solution. Even Marbach became convinced that Walther was correct. After the Altenburg Debate, Walther emerged as the unquestioned spiritual and theological leader of the colony. From the disputation in 1841 until his death in 1887, C.F.W. Walther remained the outstanding theologian and leader of the Saxon colonists and of the Missouri Synod.⁴⁸

A second struggle over the doctrine of the church began in 1841.

In 1839, about the same time that the Saxons were settling in Missouri, a group of Prussians under the leadership of Pastor Johann Andreas August Grabau and a group of Silesians under the leadership of Pastor Lebercht Friedrich Ehregott Krause were immigrating to the United States in reaction to the Prussian Union. The Prussians settled in the area around Buffalo, New York; the Silesians chose the territory of Wisconsin near Milwaukee and Freistadt.⁴⁹ While the Silesians were settling in Wisconsin, Krause had to make a sudden return to Germany. With their pastor gone, a leading layman (who later became an ordained clergyman), Heinrich von Rohr, wrote to Grabau, *Senior Ministerii*, asking permission to elect a layman who would temporarily conduct services and administer the sacraments. Grabau gave a negative response in the form of his so-called *Hirtenbrief* (Pastoral Letter) of December 1, 1840. This letter was also sent to various other German Lutheran immigrants for their inspection and approval, including the Saxons of Missouri.⁵⁰

In his *Hirtenbrief* Grabau rejected the request of the Silesian immigrants of Wisconsin, defending this position with his own analysis of Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession. Due to his fear of sectarians and vagabond preachers, which were common on the American frontier, Grabau put special emphasis on the word *rite* in the phrase *rite vocatus*. He also maintained that only an episcopal form of polity was proper for the church according to the old, accepted *Kirchenordnungen* of Germany. Although Grabau's letter dealt mainly with the doctrine of the ministry, he did assert that the one holy Christian Church, outside of which there is no salvation, is the visible church of the pure Word and Sacrament, the Lutheran Church.⁵¹

Because of the problems that arose after the expulsion of Martin Stephan, the Saxon Lutherans of Missouri did not respond to Grabau's *Hirtenbrief* until more than two years after it was written. On June 22, 1843, Pastors C.F.W. Walther, T.C.F. Gruber, G.H. Loeber, O. Fuerbringer, and G.A. Schieferdecker finally met in St. Louis and Loeber drafted a response to Grabau. Here Loeber stated:

Should we give a summary opinion of the contents of the *Hirtenbrief*, it appears to us in the first place that, in view of so much stress on the old church ordinance, the essentials are confused with the non-essentials, and the divine with the human, so that Christian freedom is curtailed. In the second

place, more is ascribed to the preaching office (pastoral office) than is proper, so that the spiritual priesthood of the congregation becomes neglected.⁵²

Grabau replied to the Saxons of Missouri on July 12, 1844, taking issue with their position. To this the Saxons replied on January 15, 1845, and one of the most heated controversies in the history of American Lutheranism began.⁵³ Beginning at its founding convention in June 1845, and continuing in subsequent meetings, what became known as the Buffalo Synod condemned the Saxons of Missouri and then the Missouri Synod, which was formed in 1847, calling upon them to retract their congregational constitution, to desist from their "loose" doctrine of the call into the ministry and their disregard for the office of the ministry as a whole, and to repent of various other "errors."⁵⁴

The first convention of the *Deutsche Evangelische Lutherische Synode von Missouri, Ohio, und andern Staaten* was held in Chicago, April 25 to May 6, 1847. The Missouri Synod was a union of the Saxons of Missouri with the *Sendlinge* (sent ones) of Wilhelm Loehe, a pastor in Neuendettelsau, Bavaria, who prepared men for the ministry and sent them to the scattered German Lutherans in the United States. The constitution was ratified on April 26, 1847. Twelve pastors and sixteen congregations became charter members. C.F.W. Walther was elected as the synod's first president (*Praeses Amt*).⁵⁵

Wilhelm Loehe, who remained in Germany, was not happy with the constitution of the Missouri Synod. In his *Kirchliche Mittheilungen aus und ueber Nordamerika* he wrote:

Finally we do not wish to keep you in ignorance concerning something which has cut us to the quick and which also is of importance for the seminary at Fort Wayne. We notice with growing concern (*mit herzlichem Bedauern*) that your synodical constitution, as it has now been adopted, does not follow the example of the first Christian congregations. We have good reason to fear that the strong admixture of democratic, independent, and congregational principles in your constitution will do greater damage than the interference of princes and governmental agencies in the church of our homeland.⁵⁶

In the face of opposition from both Europe and the United States, the Missouri Synod attempted to deal with the situation at the synodical convention of 1850. The convention decided to have a book written and published which would represent the Missouri Synod's

position and serve as a defense against the Buffalo Synod's attacks. C.F.W. Walther was chosen to author the work. By 1851 Walther had prepared an outline for the book, which was then presented to the convention in the form of two sets of theses, one on the church and the other on the ministry. These were adopted by the synodical convention and the synod resolved to have the book published in Germany.⁵⁷ Expanding his understanding first set forth in the *Altenburg Theses*, Part One of *Kirche und Amt* again avoided any mention of church polity and dealt only with doctrine:

I. The church in the proper sense of the term is the congregation (*Gemeinde*) of saints, that is, the totality of all those who have been called by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel out of the lost and condemned human race, truly believe in Christ, and are sanctified and incorporated into Christ through faith.

II. No godless person, no hypocrite, no unregenerate person, and no heretic belongs to the church in the proper sense of the term.

III. The church in the proper sense of the word is invisible.

IV. It is this true church of believers and saints to which Christ gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And it is therefore the proper and only possessor and bearer of the spiritual, divine, and heavenly goods, rights, powers, offices, etc. which Christ has procured and which are found in His church.

V. Although the true church in the proper sense of the term is essentially invisible, its presence can nevertheless be definitely recognized, and its marks are indeed the pure preaching of God's Word and the administration of the sacraments according to Christ's institution.

VI. In an improper sense Holy Scripture calls "church" (the universal [catholic] church) also the visible totality of all the called, that is, of all who confess and adhere to the proclaimed Word and use the holy sacraments, which consists of good and evil persons; so also it calls "churches" (particular churches) its several divisions, that is, the congregations that are found here and there, in which the Word of God is preached and the holy sacraments are administered. It does so because in these visible assemblies the invisible, true, and properly so-called church of believers, saints, and children of God lies hidden, and outside this assembly of the called no elect are to be looked for.

VII. As visible congregations which still essentially have the Word and the sacraments bear the name “church” according to God’s Word because of the true invisible church of true believers which is found in them, so also they possess the authority which Christ has given to His whole church, on account of the true invisible church which is hidden in them, even if there were only two or three (believers).

VIII. Although God gathers for Himself a holy church of elect persons also there where His Word is not taught in complete purity and the sacraments are not administered totally according to the institution of Jesus Christ, if God’s Word and the sacraments are not denied entirely, but both essentially remain; nevertheless, everyone is obligated by his salvation to flee false teachers, to avoid all heterodox congregations or sects, and to acknowledge and adhere to orthodox congregations and their orthodox pastors, wherever he finds such.

A. Also in heterodox and heretical churches there are children of God, and also there the true church is made manifest by the pure Word and sacraments which still remain there.

B. Everyone is obligated by his salvation to flee all false teachers and avoid fellowship with heterodox congregations or sects.

C. Every Christian is obligated by his salvation to acknowledge and adhere to orthodox congregations and their orthodox pastors, wherever he finds such.

IX. Absolutely necessary for the obtaining of salvation is only the fellowship in the invisible church, to which alone originally all the glorious promises regarding the church have been given.⁵⁸

Walther’s doctrine of the church was indeed expressed in numerous other writings and in various sermons.⁵⁹ What becomes clear from both the *Altenburg Theses* and *Kirche und Amt*, however, is that Walther’s doctrine of the church was distinctly separated from any consideration of church polity. His doctrine of the church was a form of Americanization only in that Walther took advantage of the freedom to express his beliefs. Yet his doctrine of the church was not shaped by his American environment, nor was it influenced by other denominations in the United States. Walther’s proof for his understanding of the doctrine of the church was based on Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and various church fathers.

Walther and Church Polity

The same freedom of religion in America which permitted Walther to establish a distinct doctrine of the church apart from church polity permitted Walther to establish a distinct church polity unique among American denominations until that time. John Drickamer characterized Walther's understanding of polity in this way:

Walther's views on church polity cannot be fitted into any common American version of ecclesiastical organization. He was not an Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Congregationalist. He strongly favored the synodical form of polity, which was significantly different from the other forms.⁶⁰

In the negotiations which led to the organization of the Missouri Synod, Walther expressed his convictions regarding church polity in a letter to Pastor J.A. Ernst, a Loehe *Sendling*, dated August 21, 1845:

1. [I desire] that the Synod, in addition to the Word of God, pledge itself to all the Symbols of our church and, where possible, include also the Saxon Visitation Articles. However, I shall not insist upon the acceptance and binding nature of the latter.
2. I desire that all syncretistic actions of synodical members be effectively prohibited and banned by a special paragraph in the constitution.
3. [I desire] that the chief function of the Synod should be the maintenance and furtherance of Lutheran doctrine and the guarding of the unity and the purity of the same.
4. [I desire] that the Synod should not be so constructed as to serve as an empowered legislative body, but rather as an advisory body to which a congregation in need of advice may come and take refuge. The Synod ought to steer clear especially of usurping the congregation's prerogative of calling [a pastor].
5. I desire that the lay delegates who are members of Synod receive a seat and vote in the convention precisely as the clergymen. However, the chairman should be elected from among the clergy (cf. Acts 15:23).
6. Finally, I think that the right of appeal to the decision of Synod ought never to be denied any congregation.⁶¹

In a letter to another Loehe *Sendling*, Wilhelm Sihler, Walther elaborated further on his understanding of polity:

I must confess that I have a kind of horror of a real representative constitution. I do not find it in Holy Scripture. Now, it is true that we Christians may exercise our liberty as regards our constitution, but I cannot rid myself of this opinion: The more freedom a church government in a free state like ours affords, the more efficient it will be, provided that the Word is preached in all its power in the congregations. On the other hand, everything coercive that does not flow immediately from the Word easily causes opposition by refusal to comply and lays the foundation for frequent separations. Hitherto I have not viewed a synodical organization as a concentration of ecclesiastical power. I thought that it was only to exhibit the ecclesiastical union of the separate congregations, unite its resources and forces in a war upon the oncoming ruin in doctrine and life, and for carrying on operations for the common welfare of the church, for preserving and advancing unity in faith and love, for aiming by way of commendation for the greatest uniformity possible...I was not of the opinion that all matters pertaining to the internal administration of individual congregations should be subject to the disposing and judicial power of the synod.⁶²

Although Walther believed that synodical polity was the best form of church government, he maintained that no true Lutheran would insist on one form of church polity as the only valid one.⁶³ Walther believed that it was the duty of Lutheran preachers to inform their congregations "that the choice of the polity of the church is an inalienable part of their Christian freedom..."⁶⁴

In America Walther faced a situation in which many German Lutheran immigrants, who had experienced a consistorial form of church polity in their homeland, had a certain fear of joining a synod, as if it were a kind of consistory that would attempt to rule the congregation. Because of the situation that the Saxons of Missouri had faced with Martin Stephan, and because of the fear of consistorial domination, the synod was considered to be only an advisory body. A synodical resolution was binding in the congregation in a congregational matter only when the congregation accepted it. Yet a congregation, by joining the synod, did accept

the provisions of the synodical constitution. Furthermore, doctrine was not a matter that could be accepted or rejected. What was spelled out in God's Word was not optional for a congregation belonging to the Synod.⁶⁵

As noted above, both J.A.A. Grabau and Wilhelm Loehe disagreed with Walther and the Missouri Synod over both the doctrine of the church and church polity. Loehe referred to the Missouri Synod's constitution as *Amerikanische Poebelherrshaft* ("American mob rule").⁶⁶ However, a major factor in the misunderstanding was that both Grabau and Loehe did not separate the doctrine of the church from church polity, whereas Walther did. For Walther, the doctrine of the church was non-negotiable, while church polity was a matter of Christian freedom. The freedom of religion provided in America allowed Walther to make this distinction.⁶⁷ Also, as noted above, Walther believed that because of the "free state" environment of the United States, a democratic church government was more efficient and therefore preferred, even though it is not described in Scripture.

*Walther's Doctrine of the Church
and Other Categories of Americanization*

It has been maintained in this essay that Walther's doctrine of the church can be considered a form of Americanization only in so far as he took advantage of the freedom of religion afforded in the United States. This freedom also allowed him to make a distinction between the doctrine of the church and church polity.

Walther's doctrine of the church was not an adaptation which was formulated to conform to the American environment, nor was it influenced by American citizens outside of the Missouri Synod or by governmental laws or regulations. Rather, the expulsion of Stephan, the crisis that followed, and the freedom of a pluralistic society enabled and compelled Walther to establish his doctrine of the church on an authority other than the German *Kirchenordnungen*. He chose to base his understanding upon Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and various church fathers.

With respect to influence from those outside the Missouri Synod, Alan Graebner observed:

Since its founding in 1847, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has never been in the mainstream of American Protestantism. As an immigrant church, it was long insulated

by its use of German, but even the English-speaking Missouri Synod of the twentieth century has continued to chart its own way, largely independent of the rest of American Protestantism.⁶⁸

That Walther was not easily influenced by governmental laws or regulations which he believed went against God's Word or his conscience can be seen in the situation surrounding the "Oath of Loyalty" demanded of all public officials and clergy after the Civil War. This oath required that no one should teach or speak in a public assembly who had ever supported the Confederacy.⁶⁹ Walther could not swear that he had never expressed sympathy with the Southerners without modification of the oath.⁷⁰ Eventually, Walther was allowed to take the oath with the addition of his own protest on the reverse side.⁷¹

Because civil religion has been a slow development within the United States, and because it was not readily identified in the nineteenth century,⁷² it is difficult to say how Walther felt about such a concept. Walther did agree with and support the separation of church and state and believed that the mixture of the two, as it had occurred in Germany, caused numerous problems.⁷³ That Walther did not fall into the category of Americanization identified by John Murray Cuddihy (see above) can be observed by his indignation at Samuel Schmucker's attempt at rewriting the Augsburg Confession,⁷⁴ by his editorial comments in periodicals which he helped establish,⁷⁵ and by his firm conviction that only the Evangelical Lutheran Church taught the true doctrine from God's Word.⁷⁶

Finally, the Missouri Synod does not fall into the category of being an indigenous American religious group. Nor can Walther's doctrine of the church be characterized as that of an exclusivistic American sect. Walther did believe that there was salvation outside of the Lutheran Church. He maintained that wherever God's Word is preached and His sacraments are administered rightly there will be found true believers (see the *Altenburg Theses* and *Kirche und Amt*). Yet Walther also strongly maintained that believers were to flee false teachers, and he held that church fellowship could be established only where there was complete agreement in doctrine and practice.⁷⁷

*Americanization of Walther's Doctrine of the Church
Since His Death*

Other forms of Americanization within the Missouri Synod as a whole, and of Walther's doctrine of the church in particular, gained

momentum because of the First World War.⁷⁸ At its 1917 convention, the synod changed its name from "*Die Deutsche Evangelische Lutherische Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten*" to "The Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States."⁷⁹ Already in 1914 a more progressive group of Missouri Synod members organized the American Lutheran Publicity Bureau (ALPB) in order to promote Lutheranism in a positive way in the face of American anti-Germanism. In January of 1918 the bureau began publishing the *American Lutheran* under the editorial guidance of Pastor Paul Lindemann. This was the first major unofficial publication within the Missouri Synod.⁸⁰ During the Great Depression members of the editorial board for the *American Lutheran* were growing more and more discontented with the way the Missouri Synod was being run, particularly the linguistic and nationalistic ties to German immigrants. A "plan" was devised to bring about changes within the Missouri Synod.⁸¹ In preparation for the Missouri Synod Convention of 1935 those involved in the "plan" engaged in political maneuvering and the incumbent president, Frederick Pfotenhauer, was unseated by the first American-born Missouri Synod president, John Behnken.⁸² Then, in 1945, the members of the editorial board for the *American Lutheran* called a meeting of "like-minded individuals," who then drafted "A Statement" (the so-called Statement of the Forty-Four). This document called into question the Missouri Synod's traditional position on church fellowship.⁸³ In time, other long-held doctrines would be questioned as well, leading eventually to a major disruption at one of the synod's seminaries in 1974 and the departure of approximately 75,000 people from the synod to form a new Lutheran church body in 1976.⁸⁴

Another factor in the further Americanization of Walther's doctrine of the church was the growth of the Missouri Synod and closer relations with the United States government through the military chaplaincy. Between 1932 and 1962, the Missouri Synod grew from 1,210,206 baptized congregational members and 3,133 pastors to 2,456,856 baptized congregational members and 6,192 pastors, an increase of approximately one hundred percent.⁸⁵ During that same period, the number of full-time synodical officials increased from eight to sixty, a growth of approximately six hundred and fifty percent.⁸⁶ In 1947 the synod changed its name once more,

adopting the title "church": The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.⁸⁷ By 1951 the synod had purchased its first permanent office building for full-time synodical staff.⁸⁸ Finally, between 1952 and 1962, the Missouri Synod's College of Presidents decided to redefine the synod's long-held definition of ordination, adopting the government's understanding in order to facilitate the placement of military chaplains and because of certain state regulations for performing marriages. The Missouri Synod had long maintained that ordination was the public ratification of the call into the pastoral ministry in a local congregation. The government viewed ordination as a church body's certification that an individual was qualified to function as a minister. The Missouri Synod, including Walther, had maintained that the pastoral office was established only within and by a local congregation of believers. The United States government viewed it as something established by a church body as a whole. At its 1962 convention the Missouri Synod endorsed the change made by the College of Presidents and, from that point on, one was ordained when he was certified by the synod, no matter where he was called (administrative position, teaching position, chaplaincy, or parish pastorate). Thus, the synod took on a churchly function that had been reserved for the local congregation since Walther's time.⁸⁹ Also, the synod had become more than an advisory body. Various forms of Americanization within the Missouri Synod have brought on a change of both Walther's understanding of the doctrine of the church and the polity which he helped establish in 1847.

Concluding Comments

Walther's doctrine of the church grew directly out of his experiences: the Saxon immigration, the colonist's experiences with their leader Martin Stephan, the Altenburg Debate, and the controversies with J.A.A. Grabau of the Buffalo Synod and J.K.W. Loehe in Germany.⁹⁰ Yet his doctrine of the church was based on his understanding of Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and distinguished church fathers. The freedom of religion provided in America allowed Walther to distinguish the doctrine of the church from church polity.

Since Walther's death, his doctrine of the church and his understanding of church polity have been further Americanized. Perhaps this development is unavoidable. Perhaps it is something

that demands further study and consideration. Yet Walther remained true to his principles on both the doctrine of the church and on church polity, and they did contribute greatly to the Missouri Synod's vitality and growth.⁹¹

Endnotes

1. Paul W. Spaude wrote a book entitled *The Lutheran Church under American Influence*. Yet Spaude did not deal with Walther or the Missouri Synod specifically. Nor did he make any attempt to characterize or identify specific forms of Americanization. Of special interest to this study is his chapter on "Influence of American Democracy." Here he wrote: "Consciously and unconsciously, American Lutheranism reflected the spirit prevalent in all phases of the political life of the nation: sectionalism, cooperationism, unionism, and isolationism. The Lutheran Church with its ideals of democracy found a fertile soil and enjoyed a phenomenal growth in American democracy." Paul W. Spaude, *The Lutheran Church under American Influence* (Burlington, Iowa: The Lutheran Literary Board, 1943), p. 45. This statement is true to a point, particularly when speaking of American Lutheranism as a whole. However, with respect to Walther and the Missouri Synod, other important factors must be considered.
2. *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language* (Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Company, 1968), s.v. "Americanize."
3. Also included in this group would be the Puritans who arrived in Plymouth, Massachusetts, in November of 1620 (cf. Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972], p. 135); two shiploads of Roman Catholic colonists who arrived in Maryland in March of 1634 (Ibid., p. 109); the fifteen Jewish families who came to Newport, Rhode Island, in 1658 (Ibid., p. 572); the numerous German sects who fled to William Penn's colony built on Quaker principles (Ibid., pp. 111, 230-244); and many others.
4. This change, of course, would include acculturation and assimilation, but would not be limited to these sociological phenomena. Acculturation takes place "when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups." (Milton M. Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1964], p. 61). "Assimilation is a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons or groups and, by sharing their experience

- and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life." (Ibid., p. 62.)
5. Winthrop S. Hudson, *Religion in America*, second edition (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), pp. 39-40.
 6. Ahlstrom, p. 369.
 7. Hudson, pp. 67-82, 134-144.
 8. Ahlstrom, pp. 825-841. Gerald P. Fogarty, *The Vatican and the Americanist Crisis: Denis J. O'Connell, American Agent in Rome, 1885-1903*, vol. 36, *Miscellanea Historiae Pontificiae* (Rome: Universita Gregoriana Editrice, 1974). Thomas T. McAvoy, *The Great Crisis in American Catholic History, 1895-1900* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1957).
 9. Ahlstrom, pp. 578-582. Nathan Glazer, *American Judaism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), pp. 43-59.
 10. With regard to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, consider Alan Niehaus Graebner, "The Acculturation of an Immigration Lutheran Church: The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod 1917-1929," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, New York, 1965. Neil M. Johnson, "The Patriotism and Anti-Prussianism of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod 1914-1918," *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* (hereafter cited *CHIQ*) 39 (October 1966): 99-118; Robert N. Manley, "Language, Loyalty and Liberty: The Nebraska State Council of Defense and the Lutheran Churches, 1917-1918," *CHIQ* 37 (April 1964):1-16; Frederick Nohl, "The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Reacts to United States Anti-Germanism During World War I," *CHIQ* 35 (July 1962):49-66.
 11. Robert N. Bellah, "Civil Religion in America," *Daedalus* 96 (Winter 1967), reprinted in George C. Bedell, Leo Sandon, Jr., and Charles T. Wellborn, *Religion in America* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1975), pp. 23-32. See also, Robert N. Bellah, "American Civil Religion in the 1970's," in *A Creative Recovery of American Tradition: Some Cultural and Counter-Cultural Issues*, ed. W. Taylor Stevenson, *Anglican Theological Review* (July 1973).
 12. John Murray Cuddihy, *No Offense: Civil Religion and Protestant Taste* (New York: Seabury Press, 1978), pp. 1-3.
 13. Ibid., pp. 38-47.
 14. Ibid., pp. 64-100.
 15. Ibid., pp. 102-155.
 16. Cf. Benjamin A. Johnson, "Samuel Simon Schmucker and the Ecumenical Age," in *The Maturing of American Lutheranism*, ed. Herbert T. Neve and Benjamin A. Johnson (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1968), and Abdel Ross Wentz, *Pioneer in Christian Unity: Samuel Simon Schmucker* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967).

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17. Bedell, Sandon, and Wellborn, pp. 188-203. Ahlstrom, pp. 472-509.
 18. Karl Wyneken, "Selected Aspects of C.F.W. Walther's Doctrine of the Ministry," *Studies in Church and Ministry* (ed. Erwin L. Lueker), vol. 3 (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary, 1967), p. 18. In Germany, there was almost an endless variety of *Kirchenordnungen*. There were rules for government, worship, liturgy, discipline, marital relations, education, eleemosynary work, and property rights of the church. Emil Sehling, *Die Evangelischen Kirchenordnungen der 16. Jahrhunderts*, 5 vols. (Leipzig: Verlag von O.R. Reisland, 1902). It is interesting to note that, when Nikolaus Herman had written a *Kirchenordnung* for Dessau, Martin Luther advised him not to publish it for fear that it might assume the character of a legal instrument. (*Ibid.*, 1:1.)
 19. Carl S. Munding, *Government in the Missouri Synod* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947), pp. 26, 29-31.
 20. F.J. Stahl, *Die Kirchenverfassung nach Lehre und Recht der Protestanten* (Erlangen: Verlag von Theodor Blaesing, 1840), pp. 58-61, 95-112, 125-144. Holsten Fagerberg, *Bekennntnis, Kirche und Amt in der deutschen konfessionellen Theologie des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Uppsala: Almqvist and Wiksells Boktryckeri, 1952), pp. 101-102. James H. Pragmann, *Traditions of Ministry: A History of the Doctrine of the Ministry in Lutheran Theology* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1983), pp. 129-132.
 21. A detailed analysis of the Stephanite Emigration from Saxony to the United States is set forth in Walter O. Forster, *Zion on the Mississippi: The Settlement of the Saxon Lutherans in Missouri, 1839-1841* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953).
 22. Forster, pp. 171-201. Christian Hochstetter, *Die Geschichte der Evangelische-lutherischen Missouri Synode in Nord-Amerika und ihrer Lehrkaempfe* (Dresden: Verlag von Heinrich J. Naumann, 1885), pp. 1-18.
 23. These plans began already in 1834, but were formalized between December 1837 and October 1838. Forster, pp. 113-170.
 24. *Ibid.*, pp. 114-115.
 25. Prior to the journey to America Stephan had not assumed the title "bishop." *Ibid.*, p. 135. However, by September 1838 members of the *Gesellschaft* were making direct references to Stephan as the "bishop." *Ibid.*, p. 172.
 26. Stephan's Investiture, MS., Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, (hereafter cited CHI), translated by Forster, pp. 288-290.
 27. "Pledge of Subjection to Stephan," *Selma*, February 16, 1839, MS., CHI, translated by Forster, pp. 293-296.
 28. "Sentence of Deposition Pronounced upon Stephan," MS., CHI, translated by Forster, p. 418.

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29. These confessions were called *Reinigung durch ein Bekenntnis*. Mundinger, pp. 88-102. Forster, pp. 511-516.
 30. Mundinger, pp. 94-96. Forster, pp. 512-513. Hochstetter, p. 29.
 31. William J. Schmelder, "Walther at Altenburg," *CHIQ* 34 (October 1961): 66.
 32. Carl E. Vehse, *Die Stephan'sche Auswanderung nach Amerika. Mit Actenstuecken* (Dresden: P.H. Sillig, 1840), pp. 103-105. Mundinger, pp. 95-96.
 33. Forster, p. 463.
 34. "I. Evidence concerning the rights of the congregation in relation to the clergy in religious and ecclesiastical matters; II. Evidence against the wrong Stephanite system, in which the rights of the congregation are not respected, but suppressed; III. Evidence from Luther and [a statement of] our private opinion on the justifiability of the emigration." Forster, p. 464. Vehse, pp. 56-60. Mundinger, p. 97.
 35. Vehse, pp. 54-141. Vehse himself returned as soon as he was able to raise the necessary finances. However, most of the other Saxon immigrants were unable to return because Stephan had depleted their financial resources. Forster, p. 471. Mundinger, p. 109.
 36. Forster, p. 470.
 37. Mundinger, pp. 110-111.
 38. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
 39. Walter Baepler stated that Pastor Buerger arranged for the debate. (Walter Baepler, *A Century of Grace* [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947], p. 47). Yet, W.G. Polack believed that Walther, Keyl, and Loeber set up the meeting. (W.G. Polack, *The Story of C.F.W. Walther* [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1935], p. 47.) Mundinger held that Walther's involvement in arranging for the debate cannot be determined (p. 112).
 40. Forster, p. 523.
 41. Mundinger, pp. 115-117.
 42. *Ibid.*, p. 120.
 43. The German original is found in J.F. Koesting, *Auswanderung der saechsischen Lutheraner im Jahre 1839, ihre Niederlassung in Perry-Co., Mo., und damit zusammenhaengende interessante Nachrichten* (St. Louis: A. Wiebusch u. Sohn, 1867), pp. 51-52. Translations may be found in Forster, pp. 523-525; Polack, pp. 49-50; and Louis Fuerbringer, Theodore Engelder, and Paul E. Kretzmann, eds., *The Concordia Cyclopedia* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1927), p. 15.
 44. This approach toward presenting a doctrinal position would be characteristic of Walther's theological method. It was first of all centered in the doctrine of justification by grace through faith. Erwin L. Lueker, "Church and Ministry in the Thought and Policies of Lutherans in America," *CHIQ* 42 (August, 1969): 104. His understanding of the church had a soteriological context in the doctrine of the priesthood of

all believers. From the vantage point of the believer's relationship to God through Jesus Christ, Walther would move on to other points or theses that had scriptural and confessional support and which were the logical consequence of the previous theses.

45. Koesterling, pp. 42-52.
46. Forster, p. 522. Walther's *Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt* was an expansion of the Altenburg Theses. Mundinger, p. 123.
47. Graebner, pp. 1-4.
48. William Schmelder, "The Altenburg Debate," unpublished S.T.M. thesis, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., 1960, p. 99.
49. There had been some contact between the Saxons and the Prussian-Silesians while both groups were still in Germany. Roy Suelflow, "The Relations of the Missouri Synod with the Buffalo Synod up to 1866," *CHIQ* 27 (April 1954): 2-3.
50. Roy Suelflow, p. 4. *Der Hirtenbrief des Herrn Pastors Grabau zu Buffalo vom Jahre 1840. Nebst den zwischen ihm und mehreren lutherischen Pastoren von Missouri gewechselten Schriften. Der Oeffentlichkeit uebergeben als eine Protestation gegen Geltendmachung hierarchischer Grundsaeetze innerhalb der lutherischen Kirche* (New York: H. Ludwig and Co., 1849). This is apparently the only edition of the *Hirtenbrief* extant today. It was an edition published by the Saxons, together with other documents of the controversy that ensued, as part of a polemic against Grabau's position. Copies are available at the Concordia Historical Institute.
51. *Hirtenbrief*, pp. 11-15. Roy Suelflow, p. 6. Polack, pp. 93-95.
52. *Hirtenbrief*, pp. 21-22.
53. For more detail see Roy Suelflow, *CHIQ* 27 (April 1954): 12-14.
54. Buffalo Synod, 1845 *Proceedings*, pp. 4-5. Roy Suelflow, *CHIQ* 27 (July 1954): 61-62.
55. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, *Erster Synodal-Bericht der deutschen Ev.-Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio u.a. Staaten vom Jahre 1847*, Zweite Auflage (St. Louis: Druckerei der Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, 1876). Loehe was invited to come to the United States twice, but never came.
56. Wilhelm Loehe, *Kirchliche Mittheilungen aus und ueber Nordamerika*, 6 (September 8, 1847):44. Loehe called the government organization of the Missouri Synod's constitution "Amerikanische Poebelherrschaft." He feared that the tactics used in political elections would soon be applied in the selection of pastors if laymen were given the right of suffrage in the calling of a pastor. Mundinger, p. 200. In *Der Lutheraner* 8 (1852):97, Walther said that he was genuinely sorry that Loehe harbored the erroneous notion that "sie [the Missouri Synod] dem hier grassirenden Freiheitsschwindel gewichen sie und, die gottliche Wuerde des heiligen

Predigtamtes und den Segen eines gemeinsamen geordneten Kirchenregiments aufopfernd, falsch demokratischen Grundsätzen sich hingegeben habe."

57. LCMS, *1851 Proceedings*, second edition, pp. 169-173. This book was published as *Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt* (Erlangen: Verlag von Andreas Deichert, 1852). Translations may be found in *Walther on the Church*, translated by John M. Drickamer, in *Selected Writings of C.F.W. Walther*, 6 volumes, ed. August R. Suelflow (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1981); and C.F.W. Walther, *Walther and the Church*, ed. Wm. Dallmann, W.H.T. Dau, and Th. Engelder (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1938). In "Vorwort des Redakteurs," *Der Lutheraner* 9 (August 31, 1852): 1-3, Walther expressed himself concerning the historical background of his theses. Walther stated that the battle which he and his synod were now waging against Grabau was not easy. He then went on to give several reasons. First, Grabau sought to discredit the person of his opponents and misrepresented their teachings. Second, Walther believed that he was dealing with doctrinal points which called for an earnest and spiritual understanding that many of his day lacked. They saw it only as an idle squabbling and wrangling about insignificant matters. Third, Grabau's erroneous views had crept into the Lutheran Church a long time ago and would be difficult to change. Fourth, Grabau's views concerning church and ministry agree much more with what appeals to human reason than does the true scriptural doctrine.
58. C.F.W. Walther, *Walther on the Church*, translated by John M. Drickamer, in *Selected Writings of C.F.W. Walther*, ed. August R. Suelflow (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1981), pp. 17-72. Each thesis was given three forms of support. First came "Proof from God's Word"; second, "Testimonies of the Church in Its Official Confessions"; and third, "Testimonies of the Church in the Private Writings of Its Teachers" (Luther, Chemnitz, Gerhard, and others). William Schmelder noted: "There are one hundred eighty-five quotations from ancient church fathers and Lutheran theologians to demonstrate the correctness of the nine theses on the church. There are forty-six quotations from Luther, thirty-two from Gerhard, sixteen from Augustine, and from one to eight from the other thirty-six authorities cited. Some of the quotations from Luther and Gerhard are several pages in length. It would seem a safe assumption that Walther was greatly dependent on these two representatives of Lutheran theology for his ecclesiology." Schmelder, "Walther at Altenburg," p. 80.
59. For a very thorough analysis of Walther's doctrine of the church, see John M. Drickamer, "The Doctrine of the Church in the Writings of Dr. C.F.W. Walther," unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1978.

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60. Drickamer, "The Doctrine of the Church in the Writings of Dr. C.F.W. Walther," p. 386.
 61. C.F.W. Walther, *Walthers Briefe*, ed. L. Fuerbringer, vol. 1 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1915), p. 16. Cf. August R. Suelflow, "Walther and Church Polity," *Concordia Theological Monthly* 32 (October 1961): 633-634.
 62. Quoted from *Theological Monthly* 2 (May 1922): 129. August Suelflow, "Walther and Church Polity," pp. 634-635.
 63. [C.F.W.] W[alther], "Freikirche," *Lehre and Wehre* 22 (September 1876): 285.
 64. C.F.W. Walther, *Lutherische Brosamen* (St. Louis: M.C. Barthel, 1876), p. 525.
 65. Drickamer, "The Doctrine of the Church in the Writings of Dr. C.F.W. Walther," pp. 347-348. August Suelflow, "Walther and Church Polity," pp. 636-641.
 66. Munding, p. 200.
 67. It should be noted that Walther and the Missouri synod were not the first to establish a synodical form of polity. Several other American Lutheran church bodies, mainly in the East, had already developed this form of church government. What made the Missouri Synod's polity unique was that the synod was purely advisory in congregational matters. Conrad Bergendoff, *The Doctrine of the Church in American Lutheranism* (Philadelphia: Board of Publication of the United Lutheran Church in America, 1956), pp. 57-74.
 68. Graebner, p. 1.
 69. William Hyde and Howard Conard, eds., *Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis*, vol. 3 (St. Louis: The Southern History Company, 1899), p. 1655.
 70. C.F.W. Walther, *Briefe von C.F.W. Walther*, ed. L. Fuerbringer, vol. 1 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1915), p. 235.
 71. *Ibid.*, p. 232.
 72. Bellah, "Civil Religion in America," pp. 23-32.
 73. C.F.W. Walther, "Synodalrede," *Verhandlungen der achten Jahresversammlung des Westlichen Districts der deutschen evang.-lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio u.a. Staaten im Jahre 1862* (St. Louis: Synodal-Druckerei von A. Wiebusch u. Sohn, 1862), pp. 6-11.
 74. C.F.W. Walther, "Vorwort zu Jahrgang 1856." *Lehre and Wehre* 2 (January 1856): 3. Erwin Lueker, "Walther and the Free Lutheran Conferences of 1856-1859," *Concordia Theological Monthly* 15 (August 1944): 529-563.
 75. See C.F.W. Walther, "Vorbemerkungen ueber Ursache, Zweck und Inhalt des Blates," *Der Lutheraner* 1 (September 7, 1844):1; translated by Alex W.C. Guebert, "Walther's Editorial in the First Issue of *Der Lutheraner*," *Concordia Theological Monthly* 32 (October 1961): 656-657.

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76. See C.F.W. Walther, "The Evangelical Lutheran Church, the True Visible Church of God on Earth," in *Walther on the Church*, pp. 156-192; and "The Doctrine of the Lutheran Church Alone Gives All Glory to God, an Irrefutable Proof That Its Doctrine Alone is True," in *Convention Essays*, translated by August R. Suelflow, in *Selected Writings of C.F.W. Walther*, ed. August R. Suelflow (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1981).
 77. Walther, *Kirche und Amt*, p. 145. Walther was equally unhappy about the external divisions of Christendom. For a thorough analysis of Walther's position on church fellowship, see Drickamer, "The Doctrine of the Church in the Writings of Dr. C.F.W. Walther," pp. 358-379.
 78. Alan Graebner, "The Acculturation of an Immigration Lutheran Church: The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod 1917-1929." Neil M. Johnson, "The Patriotism and Anti-Prussianism of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod 1914-1918," pp. 99-118. Frederick Nohl, "The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Reacts to United States Anti-Germanism During World War I," pp. 49-66.
 79. LCMS, *Proceedings of the Thirtieth Convention of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States. Assembled at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as the Fifteenth Delegate Synod, June 20-29, 1917* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1917), p. 43.
 80. Erwin L. Lueker, ed., *Lutheran Cyclopedia*, rev. ed. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1975), pp. 28-29. See also John C. Wohlrabe, Jr., "The Missouri Synod's Unity Attempts During the Pfotenhauer Presidency, 1911-1935," unpublished S.T.M. thesis, Concordia Seminary, 1982, pp. 56-57, 92-93, 157-158.
 81. "Plan for the American Lutheran Covering the Issues from October 1934 to May or June 1935. For the Information of the Board of Directors. Not for Publication." Lawrence B. Meyer Papers, Box 1, File 1, C.H.I. See Wohlrabe, "The Missouri Synod's Unity Attempts During the Pfotenhauer Presidency, 1911-1935," pp. 157-166.
 82. John W. Behnken, "First Draft" of *This I Recall*, in the possession of William J. Schmelder. Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. This information never made it into the final publication. See also Wohlrabe, "The Missouri Synod's Unity Attempts During the Pfotenhauer Presidency, 1911-1935," pp. 166-176.
 83. Jack Treon Robinson. "The Spirit of Triumphalism in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1972, pp. 132-252. Thomas Coates, "'A Statement'—Some Reminiscences," *CHI* 43 (November 1970): 159-163. Herbert Lindemann, "Personal Reflections on the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Publication of 'A Statement,'" *Ibid.*, pp. 164-166. Harold H. Engelbrecht, "Concerning 'A Statement,'" *Ibid.*, pp. 167-170. Walter E. Bauer, "To Recall as Well as I Can," *Ibid.*, pp. 171-173. Bernard H. Hemmner, "Reflections on the Missouri Synod," *Ibid.*, pp.

- 174-177. L.H. Deffner, " 'A Statement' Was a Turning Point," Ibid., p. 178. E.W.A. Koehler, "An Agreement," Ibid., pp. 184-187. A.T. Kretzmann, "The Statement of the 44, 1945-1979," *CHIQ* 55 (Summer 1982): 69-81. *Speaking the Truth in Love: Essays Related to A Statement, Chicago, Nineteen Forty-Five* (Chicago: The Willow Press, no date). Carl S. Meyer, ed., *Moving Frontiers* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), pp. 422-424.
84. Board of Control, Concordia Seminary, *Exodus from Concordia* (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary Publicity Office, 1977). Frederick Danker, *No Room in the Brotherhood: the Preus-Otten Purge of Missouri* (St. Louis: Clayton Publishing House, 1977). Tom Baker, *Watershed at the Rivergate* (Sturgis, Michigan: Private Printing, 1973). Kurt Marquart, *Anatomy of an Explosion* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977). James E. Adams, *Preus of Missouri and the Great Lutheran Civil War* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1977). Laurie Ann Schultz Hayes, "The Rhetoric of Controversy in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod with Particular Emphasis on the Years 1969-1976," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1980.
 85. LCMS, *1932 Statistical Year-Book* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1933), p. 138. *1962 Statistical Year-Book* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), pp. 240-283.
 86. August Suelflow, *Synodical Survey Commission Research Reports, 1959-1962*, vol. 1, p. 101. C.H.I.
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 89. For a complete analysis of this transition see John C. Wohlrabe, Jr., "An Historical Analysis of the Doctrine of the Ministry in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod until 1962," unpublished Th.D dissertation, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, pp. 339-378.
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