How the Priesthood of All Believers Became American

by Jonathan Strom

It is hard to overstate how ubiquitous the phrase "priesthood of all believers" has become in American Protestantism. In that deeply fractured context, it is widely embraced from the Southern Baptists on the Evangelical right to peace church Quakers on the left. Bill Hybels, the founder of Willow Creek, the epitome of the American mega-church, devotes significant attention to the priesthood of all believers in his popular works.[1] Lutherans in America, of course, also embrace the priesthood of all believers as part of their legacy.[2] If, alongside the slogan of *sola scriptura*, there is a piece of the Reformation's legacy that continues to resonate broadly in the Protestantism of the twenty-first century in North America, it is the common priesthood or the priesthood of all believers. While we might be tempted to treat this as an historical constant, that was far from the case. In early America, including among Lutherans, it was not a central feature of American Protestantism. That changed in the nineteenth century when it became for many a signature characteristic that cut across confessions and denominations. Even as the common priesthood remained closely associated with Luther and the Reformation, by the early twentieth century, Lutherans no longer exclusively defined it, and it took on broader cultural relevance in American Protestantism. In turn, this came to affect how some American Lutherans understood it.

One of the difficulties of addressing the common priesthood, as I prefer to describe it, is the wide range of terminology associated with it. The formulation "priesthood of all believers" (*das Priestertum aller Gläubigen*) did not come into wide usage until the late nineteenth century and yet dominates most popular and scholarly discussions today. Luther did not, as Timothy Wengert points out, use that precise wording, and he never settled on uniform language with regard to the common priesthood that all Christians share.[3] He could refer to it as: "das eynige gemeyne priesterthum (the one,

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common priesthood),"[4] "eyn Christlich geystlich Priesterthumb (a Christian spiritual priesthood),"[5] "de[r] gemeine priesterstand aller getauffter Christen (the common priesthood of all baptized Christians),"[6] among other expressions. Each linguistic formulation is not without significance, of course, but individual formulations cannot be read in narrow textual isolation from one another. Beginning with Luther, these different phrasings—often varying within one tract—represented a broader semantic field of meaning and stood for more than a bare literal construct. In seventeenth-century Lutheranism it became collectively known as "das geistliche Priesterthum (the spiritual priesthood)"; in the nineteenth century "das allgemeine Priesterthum (the common priesthood)" became the dominant turn of phrase in Protestant Germany, whereas in the English-speaking world it was "the universal priesthood," sometimes "the general priesthood" and increasingly at the end of the nineteenth century, "the priesthood of all believers." Adding to the interpretative difficulty, a number of commentators refer to the "doctrine of the priesthood of all believers," as if there is broad agreement what this phrase means theologically. But the priesthood of all believers or the common priesthood is less a defined doctrine than a complex of ideas about key biblical passages, the role of the laity in the church, the scope of the ordained ministry, and the nature of priesthood in theology and culture.[7]

In the following, I will make the argument that the common priesthood was not originally a significant part of American Protestantism. Rather, after three centuries of being narrowly and often controversially Lutheran, it was transformed to represent a decidedly ecumenical version of Protestantism in Germany, and from there, influenced American Protestants who had close ties to Germany, including Charles Hodge, but most especially Philip Schaff, the Swiss émigré to the United States and founder of the American Society of Church History, whose works were enormously influential in shaping Protestant perceptions of the Reformation by Americans not only in the nineteenth but well into the twentieth century.

I will begin with some brief framing. First, in overview, how I see the common priesthood developing in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries in Germany. Second, I will argue that the

common priesthood was generally not an explicit part of British or early American Protestantism, including the eighteenth-century revival movements. After this, I turn to what I see as a change in the nineteenth century, where earlier ideas that had been closely tied to Luther and Lutheran ideals merged into broader conceptions of Protestantism that were avidly taken up by North Americans. I will conclude with some observations about the ongoing career of the common priesthood in the twentieth century.

Early Modern Germany and the Common Priesthood

Most Protestants have at least a passing acquaintance with what we usually term "the priesthood of all believers." There is a substantial amount of literature devoted to Luther's understanding of the common priesthood, with new dissertations and monographs continuing to appear.[8] There is not much dispute that Luther began articulating a new understanding of clergy and laity beginning around 1519 and with increasing frequency in the early 1520s, though scholars continue to disagree about the meaning of common priesthood in Luther and the relationship between the common priesthood and the ordained office of ministry, especially after 1525. Major recent contributions include Harald Goertz's *Allgemeines Priestertum und ordiniertes Amt bei Luther* (Common Priesthood and Ordained Office in Luther, 1997), Martin Krarup's *Ordination in Wittenberg* (2007) and Timothy Wengert's *Priesthood, Pastors and Bishops* (2008).[9] There are real disagreements among scholars especially about interpreting Luther that cannot be resolved here, but a few observations may be in order. First, Luther continued to make reference to the common priesthood well into the 1530s and as late as 1544.[10] For Luther, tying language of priest and priesthood to all Christians was not only an impulse to counter a clerical estate opposed to reform, but also an expression that all Christians are called to priestly functions in relation to neighbor and community which, however, do not stand in opposition to the public office of ministry.[11] Second, few of Luther's fellow reformers emphasize the common priesthood at all after 1525. Neither Philip Melanchthon nor Johannes Bugenhagen appear to give it much, if any, prominence.[12] Themes of the common

priesthood do not appear explicitly in any of the Lutheran confessions.[13] Third, in the confessional period after Luther's death, the common priesthood is cited only rarely. Perhaps the most extended treatment is a section on the *sacerdotium commune* found in David Chyträus's 1569 tract, *On Sacrifice*.[14] Tileman Heshusius mentions it briefly in an anti-papal context, and there is a short section in Philip Nicolai in 1604, though none of these appear to have resonance among other later Lutherans.[15]

The common priesthood emerged again among German Lutherans in the 1630s with the work of Joachim Betke, who made its recovery a central theme of his withering criticism of the Lutheran church and its clergy in his 1636 book entitled: *Mensio Christianismi Et Ministerii Germaniae*, which he further amplified a few years later with his *Sacerdotium, Hoc Est, New-Testamentisches Königliches Priesterthumb*.[16] Central to Betke's arguments were extensive passages from Luther on the common priesthood. Betke wrote with passion—his use of Luther could be somewhat haphazard—but he made an urgent case that the church could only be reinvigorated through the engagement of laity and Luther's idea of royal priesthood. *Mensio,* in particular, found an eager audience, and over the next twelve years it would go through at least six editions. Pastor of a rural Brandenburg parish in Linum, Betke is often considered a mystical spiritualist, though he was not quite as radical as the company he kept.[17] The critical tone of *Mensio* got him hauled before the consistory in Berlin at least twice. Yet while unhappy, the consistory did not remove him from office or otherwise punish him.

Shortly thereafter Betke's *Mensio* was amplified through a collection of sermons by Johann Vilitz, a pastor in Quedlinburg, who seized on many of Betke's insights but toned down his harsh rhetoric, especially criticism of the clergy and civil authorities, and focused on how the common priesthood could aid the clergy in reforming the church. His book, enititled *Regale Sacerdotium* (1639), was dependent on Betke's *Mensio* but he did two things that were important for seventeenth-century Lutheran understandings of the common priesthood.[18] First, Vilitz worked his way through the German volumes of the Jena edition of Luther and his postils to provide the widest possible range of passages from Luther to support

the common priesthood. In a period when reverence for Luther was at its peak, this could be quite persuasive. Second, Vilitz standardized relatively quickly the language of "das geistliche Priesterthum" that would become the shorthand to characterize the common priesthood among almost all Lutherans of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, whether Pietist or Orthodox.

Vilitz did much to make *das geistliche Priestertum* acceptable among a wide range of Lutherans in the seventeenth century, but it was especially Philipp Jacob Spener who popularized it and made it central to his Pietist proposals. Although he may have sympathized more with Betke than he let on in public, he reprinted Vilitz's work in 1670, and cited him explicitly in his 1675 *Pia Desideria* in support of his proposal to reinvigorate *das geistliche Priesterthum*.[19] In 1677, Spener published a separate tract, *Das Geistliche Priesterthum*, that laid out his understanding with extensive biblical analysis and an appendix of authorities—most prominently Luther—that was nearly as long as the body of the tract itself.[20] Spener used the common priesthood to justify the participation of laity in the life of the church, especially within the *collegia pietatis*, but also more generally in devotional life and with regard to other members of the Christian community. The most controversial aspect proved to be Spener's full inclusion of women within the offices or *Ämter* of the spiritual priesthood, which he identified as the Word, prayer, and sacrifice.[21]

Opposition to the Pietist understanding of *das geistliche Priestertum* grew in the later seventeenth century, but the debate was never about its existence, *per se*, but rather about how far it ought to extend and whether a broad understanding undermined the ordained office of ministry. Spener always imagined it as a vital adjunct to the ordained office, but, as Martin Greschat has noted, for Spener the relationship of ordained minister and laity had become more brotherly or fraternal, while his Orthodox opponents in contrast emphasized a more hierarchical father-child relationship and a higher notion of office that included a special *Amts-Gnade* or grace of office.[22]

The impact of the spiritual priesthood was more limited in the eighteenth century. Radical Pietists found Spener's interpretation of the common priesthood too constrictive, and a number of them

developed a notion of an elite and ascetic Melchizedek Priesthood. For instance, Ernst Christoph Hochmann von Hohenau and Johann Gichtel connected it to Luther, but they were also influenced by English Böhmist interpretations of a Melchizedek priesthood via Jane Leade. In North America, Georg Conrad Beissel continued this notion of the Melchizedek priesthood in the Ephrata community.[23]

More mainstream Pietists after Spener were ambivalent as well. Although August Hermann Francke would occasionally mention it, it was not a major theme in his work. In contrast, Francke concentrated much more on the importance of a properly converted ministry to further his Pietist aims. His Halle colleague Joachim Lange carried on a debate with Orthodox opponents, such as Valentin Ernst Löscher, on the spiritual priesthood in the 1710s, but Lange defined it narrowly and included only a small portion of true Christians who were properly anointed to this spiritual priesthood, a strong contrast to Luther's priesthood of all the baptized.[24] Some early Enlightenment jurists could embrace the common priesthood, such as Christian Thomasius, though in part it served for Thomasius to limit the authority of the clergy in the early modern absolutist state.[25] When Johann Adam Steinmetz, who was at the heart of the church Pietist movement in the eighteenth century, republished some of Spener's writings in the mid-eighteenth century, including *das Geistliche Priesterthum*, he remarked that each generation had to recover the spiritual priesthood anew, an indication that it was not quite forgotten but hardly as prominent as one might assume.[26]

Early America and the Common Priesthood

Some commentators on the common priesthood see it as a through-line of Protestantism since the Reformation, not only Luther but the Reformed and dissenting communities as well, including early American traditions. This is, for instance, the position of Cyril Eastwood, a British Methodist scholar whose 1960 book, *The Priesthood of All Believers*, seeks to trace the common priesthood throughout Protestantism from Luther to the middle of the last century.[27] Because Eastwood works with an ideal construction of the "doctrine" of the priesthood of all believers, he could infer

that the common priesthood is at work in specific figures who claim lay authority, even when there is virtually no reference to priestly language, much less a specific claim to something we might recognize as the common priesthood or priesthood of all believers. We might read Eastwood as a cultural artifact of Anglo-American Protestantism that assumed the place of the priesthood of all believers as central to Protestant identity since the Reformation,[28] but many of his examples of proponents of the common priesthood are unconvincing.[29]

In contrast, I argue that there is little explicit reference to the common priesthood in British or American Protestantism until the middle of the nineteenth century. To be sure, there are occasional references to 1 Peter 2:9 and Revelation 1:6, and I will discuss a few of these briefly, but evidence suggests that early American Protestants only rarely made reference to something we would recognize as the common priesthood. Arguments for lay authority generally found other bases rather than the language of a shared or common priesthood.

Indeed, one reason the common priesthood never really gained a rhetorical foothold in Britain or early America may have been the relatively strong phenomenon of lay involvement in Protestant Christianity from the seventeenth century onwards. Thomas Cartwright, for instance, could make the argument for the lay right to read and interpret scripture without any recourse to notions of the royal or common priesthood, contrary to Eastwood's suggestion.[30] In contrast, when we see the revival of the common priesthood in German Lutheranism during the 1630s and 1640s, a significant part of its context was a criticism of a clerical culture within Lutheran communities and, correspondingly, an exceptionally weak structure of lay involvement in Lutheran churches that would not have characterized Puritan New England.[31] Furthermore, the veneration of Luther as an authority meant that his wide range of statements on the common priesthood could take on an outsized influence in German Lutheranism, but would not have had the same authority in the Puritan tradition.[32]

Second, the designation of the Church of England's ordained office as an explicit "priesthood" devalued this as a positive designation

when it came to lay or any Christians by those who were implacably opposed to the form of episcopacy and priesthood represented by the Church of England. It is telling that "priestcraft" became an all-purpose epithet that Puritans, dissenters, Quakers, and rationalists used to criticize the ordained ministry and clericalized culture, most especially the Anglican priesthood but by no means limited to the Anglicans.[33] The charge of "priestcraft" had a long tradition in British and American Protestantism that carried well into the nineteenth century when above all Baptists but also radical Methodists like Lorenzo Dow continued to rail against it.[34] "Priestcraft" is in some ways the rhetorical inverse of the common priesthood. It was not just anti-clerical, but also tainted the reappropriation of the word "priest" for all Christians, a move that would become central to the positive application of the common priesthood.

Of course, biblical passages typically used to support the common priesthood come up from time to time. For instance, both Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards could make reference to 1 Peter 2:9 and the royal priesthood in a positive sense.[35] Edwards, in fact, delivered an entire sermon on 1 Peter 2:9 that is probably the longest treatment of the common priesthood in early America. He even employs language of "spiritual priesthood" in a way that might suggest a German Pietist influence, though there is no strong evidence for this.[36] But unlike among Pietists, especially in the seventeenth century, there is no broader resonance of this theme elsewhere in Edwards' larger corpus. And in pointed contrast to Protestant Germany, New England laity scarcely required justification for their authority with regard to the ordained ministry and often did not fail to wield it. Edwards himself was later dismissed from his Northampton church because of the unhappiness of his congregation's members.[37]

One might suspect the influence of the common priesthood through the immigration of German Pietists to North America in the eighteenth century, yet there does not seem to be any lasting influence through Lutheran or broader Protestant traditions with regard to the common priesthood. There are a number of occasional references by Johann Martin Boltzius in Ebenezer, Georgia, to the "spiritual priesthood," that were typical of Lutheran Pietism.[38] Yet

the Halle-trained Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, often hailed as the patriarch of American Lutheranism, made almost no reference to it in his journals, correspondence, or autobiography, which makes sense insofar as Muhlenberg sought to secure clerical authority over and against lay assertions of power in the church.[39] Nor did Samuel Simon Schmucker, who in many respects revered the Pietist tradition, advocate it; his 1834 *Elements of Popular Theology*, that sought to define a distinctive American Lutheranism, does not mention the common or spiritual priesthood.[40] This would change with Lutheran immigrants in the nineteenth century, particularly from German territories, but earlier American Lutherans, even those with Pietist roots, did not appear to take a strong interest in the common priesthood.

In the early republic, as Hartmut Lehmann argues, Luther became a figure of fascination for many in America.[41] He was a heroic figure for Ralph Waldo Emerson—at least for a time—and Emerson included a presentation on Luther in his public lecture circuit in the 1830s.[42] Yet an examination of a wide range of books on Luther and the Reformation from a range of perspectives in the first half of the nineteenth does not reveal the common priesthood or priesthood of all believers to be a major theme. Most do not mention it at all, much less make it a major feature of Luther's thought or a characteristic of the Reformation.[43] No one reading these works in America would come away with the idea that the common priesthood was in any way a major theme or topic of Luther and Reformation. This, however, started to shift in the mid-nineteenth century as influences from Germany began to influence American perspectives.

Two Strands of the Common Priesthood in Nineteenth-Century Germany

After relatively little innovation in the eighteenth century, at the beginning of the nineteenth two broad strands of thinking emerged in Protestant Germany with regard to the common priesthood that were not entirely unrelated but responded to different concerns about confessional identity and the place of Protestantism in nineteenth-century Germany. These two strands pulled in some

different directions that, in turn, brought them into tension and even conflict, and they would have distinct influences on the American reception of the common priesthood.

The first strand is a legacy of the Lutheran tradition and was most often though not universally identified with "das geistliche Priesterthum," or the spiritual priesthood. It represented the Lutheran heritage of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, especially Pietist but by no means exclusively so. It became particularly important during the emergence of the *Erweckungsbewegung* or revival movement in nineteenth-century Germany. In Lutheran circles, this is typically how it would be understood. In his history of the church since the Reformation, Johann Matthias Schrökh connected the common priesthood with the spiritual priesthood—he used both terms "allgemeines Priesterthum (common priesthood)" and "geistliches Priesterthum (spiritual priesthood)" interchangeably—and strongly identified it with Spener and the Pietist heritage.[44] Despite a renewed interest in Luther as a leading German figure in the early years of the nineteenth century, there does not appear to be more than occasional interest in Luther's understanding of the common priesthood around the 1817 jubilee of the Reformation.[45] In fact, some Lutheran theologians took the occasion to go in quite different directions and emphasize the distinctively priestly nature of the office of ministry over and against the laity. In his own, updated "95 Theses" from 1817, Claus Harms criticized the current Lutheran church, especially the influence of rationalism but also the perceived diminution of clerical status.[46] Undoubtedly, Harms' embrace of priestly language for the office of ministry betrayed some uneasiness about the status of the clergy in the early nineteenth century with the rise of rationalism and profound political changes across Germany.

In the *Erweckungsbewegung*, the Pietist understanding of the common priesthood appears to take on new meaning. In Prussia, Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg (1802–1869) referred relatively frequently to "das geistliche Priesterthum" as a characteristic of the Evangelical Church, beginning in the first issues of his journal, *Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung* in 1827.[47] A pastor in Saxony published a new edition of Spener's *Das geistliche Priesterthum* in 1830,

and in 1831 the *Kirchen-Zeitung* ran a glowing review of the new edition that warmly and without reservation endorsed his rather broad understanding of the common priesthood as a means to revive piety.[48] In southern Germany, the revival-oriented publishers of the *Christen-Bote* in 1833 identified one of Spener's most important legacies to be *das geistliche Priestertum* that allowed laity to engage and interpret scripture, pray for others, as well as to form their own devotional groups—all, of course, without injuring the ordained office.[49] The *Christen-Bote* continued to raise this revival of the Pietist understanding of the common priesthood well into the 1840s, arguing that it had been left insufficiently implemented.[50] This strand continues throughout the nineteenth century, but many in the *Erweckungsbewegung* became quite critical of a wide extension of the common priesthood, including Hengstenberg, especially as it was represented by the second broader strand, and their own interpretation of it will become considerably more elite and restrictive.[51]

The second strand appears to have a different origin, born less out of a Pietist heritage that was self-consciously Lutheran than a new sense of general Protestant distinctiveness, particularly in the face of new challenges from those who reject Christianity altogether or find Catholicism a compelling alternative. One place where interpreters have identified this is, for instance, in Schleiermacher's famous *Speeches* (1799) on the idealized, non-hierarchical Christian (that is, Protestant) community, especially the fourth speech, where he refers to "each person is a priest" and at the same time "each is a layperson."[52] Christine Helmer sees Schleiermacher propounding a community that is "identical with a Protestant (and Pietist) understanding of the common priesthood."[53] Whether this precisely corresponds with Pietist and earlier Protestant understandings of the common priesthood is open to question, but it does reflect an understanding of the common priesthood that is broadly Protestant and less confessionally identified with Lutheranism or for that matter Calvinism. By highlighting the idea of everyone a priest, Schleiermacher may also have been appealing to a Romantic reappropriation of the priestly in the aesthetic realm.[54] In his second edition of the *Speeches* (1806), Schleiermacher makes the contrast to Roman Catholicism even clearer on the question of the priesthood.[55] The

theme of the common priesthood appears periodically in Schleiermacher in the *Glaubenslehre*, where he writes of the "Christian priesthood" and the "Christian common priesthood"[56] as well as in an 1826 sermon on 1 Peter 2:9 where he likewise emphasized that all belong to this priesthood.[57]

One of the strongest advocates for this strand of the common priesthood in the first half of the nineteenth century was the church historian August Neander. A Jewish convert to Christianity, he credited Schleiermacher's *Speeches* as particularly influential in his youthful conversion, though he later moved in a more traditional direction.[58] Specializing in early Christianity, Neander did not stress the Pietist or even the Lutheran origins of the common priesthood but rather developed it based on his understanding of the early church. Writing on Chrysostom in 1821, Neander talked about "die Grundidee des ursprünglichen Christenthums von dem allgemeinen Priesterthum aller Christen (the foundational idea of original Christianity regarding the common priesthood of all Christians)."[59] This remained a central theme of Neander's work on the early church, particularly with his interpretation of Tertullian,[60] that would become influential on North Americans because of the popularity of his translations into English. Philip Schaff would later remark on this broad American influence, noting that there were more editions of Neander's main historical works in English than in German.[61]

Neander also applied this notion of the common priesthood, "das allgemeine Priesterthum," to the contemporary Protestant church in Prussia in his less historical and more programmatic discussions. It came up in his popular presentations, for instance, in honor of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Prussian Bible Society in 1839.[62] He talked about the common priesthood as a revitalizing part of the church with his former students such Johann Hinrich Wichern in the 1840s.[63] And he hoped that in the discussions of a new church constitution in Prussia in 1846, that the common priesthood would play a greater role in the polity of the church.[64] This did not come to pass, but Neander saw the first half of the nineteenth century as a time when lay witness to faith could emerge and that "das allgemeine Priesterthum" could once again, as he put it, "make its power operative."[65]

The common priesthood became part of broader discussions of Protestantism in Germany during the first half of the nineteenth century. One of the strongest public advocates was Christian Carl Josias von Bunsen, the Prussian diplomat and ardent lay theologian. Highly learned and with a broad humanistic education, Bunsen, too, had been influenced by Schleiermacher as a young man in Berlin.[66] Deeply devoted to the Protestant cause, when he became secretary to the Prussian ambassador to the Vatican, he organized almost single-handedly the 1817 Reformation celebrations at the Prussian legation in Rome, including delivering the public lecture on its occasion.[67] Later in conjunction with the legation's chaplains, he developed his own revision of a Protestant liturgy for use in Rome that he later published. Bunsen, who became Prussian ambassador to the Vatican in 1823, went on to a distinguished diplomatic career, including as Prussian ambassador to Great Britain. He was a kind of Protestant patriot, devout and not narrowly confessional, and he was particularly invested in building ecumenical connections between British and German Protestants. As Samuel Keeley argues, he was concerned with a loss of Protestant cultural vitality in the nineteenth century and sought to counter that, in part, through a recovery of the common priesthood. We can see that in his proposal for reform of the liturgy published in 1833[68] but especially in his programmatic 1845 book, *Die Verfassung der Kirche der Zukunft*, which has a long section devoted to the common priesthood that was not merely a proposal for polity but a sketch for how the common priesthood could renew Protestantism through greater inclusion of the laity in the work of the church.[69] It is this second strand that would particularly influence broader American understandings of the common priesthood.

Philip Schaff and the Americanization of the Common Priesthood

In 1854 Philip Schaff delivered a series of lectures to audiences in Berlin and Frankfurt on Christianity in America in which he described the common priesthood as a characteristic element of American Protestantism. The Swiss-born Schaff had been an exceptionally promising student in Tübingen and Berlin, and as an emerging

church historian he forged a close connection to August Neander.[70] Schaff had been called to the United States as a professor at the small theological seminary in Mercersburg, Pennsylvania, almost as a missionary in the eyes of some to bring German theological rigor to Protestantism in America. His inaugural lecture, published in 1845 as the *Principle of Protestantism*, provoked deep criticisms among American Protestants for describing the Catholic origins and ongoing catholicity of Protestantism.[71] The outrage was such that he faced a trial for heresy, though he was easily acquitted. Prior to arriving in America, Schaff knew little about Christianity in the United States and initially he could be dismissive of American denominationalism or sectarianism. But even in this first work you can see Neander's influence, including his notion of the common priesthood as central to Protestantism, though it was not so prominent as it would later become.[72]

Ten years later, by the time of his lectures in Germany, Schaff had become more appreciative of the diversity of American Protestantism, and he sought to explain his understanding to his German audiences. One aspect that stands out is the way that Schaff connects the common priesthood (*das allgemeine Priestertum*) to the unique American political circumstances. In the preface to the published lectures, he wrote:

> Just as a full unfolding of the principle of Catholicism, in both the good form of authority and the bad form of tyranny, had to precede the purifying and emancipating struggle of the Reformation. Now America tends towards this consistent carrying out of the religious and political principle of Protestantism; that is, the practical application of the universal priesthood and kingship of Christians.[73]

Schaff explicitly tied *allgemeines Priestertum* here to the republican structure of the United States:

> [It] is, in some sense, a transferring to the civil sphere the idea of the universal priesthood of Christians, which was first clearly and emphatically brought forward by the Reformers. With the universal priesthood comes also a corresponding universal kingship; though, of course, this no more excludes a special kingship, or a rank of rulers, than the other, a particular ministry. This universal kingship is what the American Republic aims at.[74]

Schaff is the first whom I have found to make the connection that American Protestantism is an exemplary development of the common priesthood that is particularly well-suited to American republican ideals. Earlier, Schaff remarked several times on the common priesthood as a feature of true Christianity—in the *Mercersburg Review* as well as in his book, *History of the Apostolic Church*, where, much like his teacher Neander, he made the common priesthood a central aspect of early Christianity.[75] But this connection of the common priesthood to American Protestantism in the 1854 lectures appears distinctive. He mentions it several times throughout the book. For instance, "We need unquestionably independent congregations, in which the general priesthood shall be no empty name, but a living reality," highlighting Congregationalists as an ideal, though one that lacked, in Schaff's view, a necessary presbyterial or episcopal structure.[76]

It is true that there was an increasing receptivity to a notion of the common priesthood in the United States during the 1850s, and this was not solely due to Schaff. Denominational presses picked it up from Schaff and other sources. This goes beyond the *Mercersburg Review* and the *German Reformed Messenger* (later the *Reformed Messenger*) which were closely associated with Schaff, and in which Schaff continued to publish. It also applies to much more diverse denominational journals such as the *Friends' Review*, a Quaker journal published in Philadelphia which explicitly drew on Neander's work on the early church to further an understanding of the common priesthood. In other articles, the Friends would increasingly connect it as central to the Quaker vision of a religious community without a professional ministry.[77] Other denominational journals also embraced the common priesthood. The *Methodist Quarterly Review*, the best-known Wesleyan journal of nineteenth-century America, began discussing the common priesthood with some frequency during the 1850s in response to Neander's work on the early church and then later as influenced by the sessions of the 1857 Berlin Conference of the Evangelical Alliance, in which several speakers emphasized the common priesthood.[78] American Methodists interpreted this as fully consonant with their own understanding of lay authority and a way of harnessing those Protestants with different

creeds "to combine their strength against common enemies."[79] By the 1860s, Methodists were discussing the common priesthood in more popular periodicals such as the *Ladies Repository* published in Cincinnati, and by the 1870s it was a common topic in a range of other Methodist periodicals such as the *Christian Advocate* published in New York or the *Southern Review* published in Baltimore. There, Schaff was given particular credit for reviving the "universal priesthood of believers" as a central part of Protestant identity.[80] We can multiply this with many other examples, for instance from the breakaway Reformed Episcopal Church that explicitly emphasized that "all believers are a 'royal priesthood'" in its split with the Episcopal Church in the early 1870s.[81] Opposition to Roman Catholicism was an explicit part of many claims for the common priesthood at this time and was likely indicative of broader anti-Catholic bias among many American Protestants in the late nineteenth century.[82]

It would be wrong to suggest that Schaff was the sole source driving the understanding of the common priesthood, as there were multiple paths from Germany to America. In the early 1850s Charles Hodge, certainly no friend to the Mercersburg theologians, referred to the universal priesthood in the *Princeton Review* and preached on the "priesthood of believers" several times in subsequent years.[83] The ecumenical Evangelical Alliance had an effect with propagating the common priesthood among a range of denominations; Bunsen's books, most of which were translated into English, had an independent influence as well.[84] But it is difficult to overestimate the influence of Philip Schaff on the American conception of church history and especially the claim that the common priesthood was a central element of Protestantism. After leaving Mercersburg, he moved to New York and later held one of the most prominent chairs in church history in the United States at Union Seminary. He was the founder of the American Society of Church History in 1888, and his books influenced generations of students through their many editions, which continued to be printed well into the twentieth century.

In his *Creeds of Christendom* from 1877, Schaff argued that the Reformation was the "greatest event" in Christian history after its inception with Christ, and he identified the common priesthood as one of three fundamental principles of Protestants after the Bible and

the doctrine of justification by faith.[85] Schaff continued to reinforce this perspective through his active participation in the Evangelical Alliance.[86] The common priesthood was an important theme in his address to the Alliance's gathering in Copenhagen in 1884, "Discord and Concord," in which he extolled Protestantism over Roman Catholicism for having the "unspeakable advantage of evangelical freedom" and "the general priesthood of believers."[87] During the anniversary year of Luther's birth in 1883, Schaff further reinforced his contention that the common priesthood found special affinity in American republicanism. "The principle of the general priesthood of the Christian people is the true source of religious and civil freedom. It has never yet been fully realized in Europe but has its widest prospects in the virgin soil of this vast republic under the sunshine of liberty if we are true to our trust and avoid the dangers that threaten us."[88]

Schaff's views were widely shared in the English-speaking world at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. Thomas Lindsay, a Free Church Scottish historian who was influenced, at least in part, by Schaff, elevates the common priesthood even further, making it the overriding principle of the entire Reformation. He could declare, "the Priesthood of all believers is the principle of the Reformation," and he derived other principles such as justification or *sola scriptura* directly from it.[89] Lindsay's main works on Luther and the Reformation would continue to be reprinted well into the twentieth century.[90]

If one surveys popular and scholarly works on Protestantism and the Reformation at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century in the United States, the language of the priesthood of all believers or universal priesthood seems remarkably widespread especially in contrast to American works one hundred years earlier. In 1901, a Methodist minister from Albion, Michigan, could declare that one of his main reasons for being a Protestant was "the common priesthood of all believers, and the nearness of God to each individual soul [which] makes unnecessary and useless the arrogant claims of a hierarchy or priesthood which puts itself between the Father and his children."[91] In 1910, Isaac Haldeman, the conservative Evangelical leader of New York's First Baptist

Church, decried Romish suppression of "the common priesthood of all believers" in an oft-reprinted book that was a part of his larger anti-Catholic criticisms.[92] Elsewhere, we see in the early twentieth century descendants of the Stone-Campbellites identifying their restorationist movement strongly with the idea the priesthood of all believers,[93] something that another restorationist group, the U. S. Plymouth Brethren also did.[94] The popular biography of Luther by Arthur Cushman McGiffert, *Martin Luther, The Man and His Work*, first published in 1911, highlighted the common priesthood as a central feature of Luther. And later in the fraught celebrations of the 400th anniversary of the Reformation in the midst of World War I, McGiffert like Schaff before him, connected the flourishing "great democratic notion" of the "priesthood of all believers" to the context of the United States.[95] More scholarly approaches to Luther and the Reformation by Preserved Smith also included reference to the commonplace nature of Luther's "priesthood of all believers" in his work on the Reformation, though in a more nuanced way.[96]

Lutherans in America

American Lutherans also took up the common priesthood in the mid-nineteenth century, but many of these discussions centered on the relationship of the common priesthood to the office of ministry. The dispute of C. F. W Walther and J. A. A. Grabau in the middle decades of the century is a characteristic example of how inner-Lutheran debates on the common priesthood centered on the relationship to the office of ministry.[97] Of course, for Lutheran immigrants from lands with state churches, the new context of the United States required a rethinking of traditional church government. In this setting, Walther relied on a transference theory of ministerial office from the congregation which was rooted in the common priesthood to which Grabau strenuously objected.[98] Without question, the common priesthood featured more and more in American Lutheran discussions during the second half of the nineteenth century, but most discussions of it remained closely tied to the theological understanding of the ministerial office and questions

of governance, which were not a major part of broader Protestant discussions beyond Lutheran circles.

As in other epochs, a more expansive understanding of the common priesthood could compete with the rights and privileges of the clergy, but most American Lutherans retained a relatively high understanding of ministerial office. As Todd Nichol argues, even though Lutherans in America disagreed on many issues, they tended to avoid the extremes of the debates in Germany and landed on a broad consensus on the nature of ministerial office that continued well into the twentieth century despite disagreements on transference or the role of laity in governance.[99] In the early 1860s, Matthias Loy came to advocate a relatively robust understanding of the common priesthood against a narrow understanding of it that was limited to offering only spiritual sacrifices. He particularly argued for its use as part of the keys and absolution and was one of the first to consistently use the precise wording of the "priesthood of all believers" in the American context.[100] He articulated something close to a transference theory of ministerial authority. Others such as Charles Porterfield Krauth resisted lay involvement in the government of the church, but still allowed room for exercise of the common priesthood in a limited way.[101] By the end of the century, American Lutherans, following larger trends among Protestants and discussions in Germany, began to emphasize the common priesthood in popular depictions of Luther, such as in Henry E. Jacobs' biography of Luther.[102]

Almost all American Lutherans accepted the common priesthood to some extent, but they were not in agreement about its extent or interpretation. Disagreements about the transference theory continued, and some interpreted the common priesthood quite narrowly in the early twentieth century.[103] Yet around the same time, other Lutherans in America sought to expand the understanding of the common priesthood. In 1907, a lecture to a Luther League assembly in Pennsylvania emphasized the "universal priesthood of believers" drawing on the importance of sacrifice and prayer but also social action in the sense of the Inner Mission.[104] The same year when Henry E. Jacobs published his *Summary of the Christian Faith*, he translated and appended the body of Spener's *The Spiritual*

Priesthood, the only such historical document in his book, which is difficult to interpret as anything but a call to greater lay engagement on the basis of the common priesthood.[105] Another translation of Spener's *The Spiritual Priesthood* appeared ten years later as a stand-alone publication.[106]

Overall, Lutherans in American remained cautious interpreters of the common priesthood and did not make the grand claims for it that we see in Schaff and Lindsay's historical works or the more striking justifications for it among other radical Protestants such as the Quakers, who rejected the ordained ministry altogether. Although the common priesthood may have been quite closely tied to Luther and the Reformation as in Schaff or Lindsay, American Lutherans were not the prime drivers of interpretations of the common priesthood in the American public sphere. Lutherans on all sides remained more confessionally oriented and their interpretations tended to reflect the debates surrounding the first strand of the common priesthood described above,[107] namely, how Luther and the Lutheran tradition had understood the common priesthood above all in relation to the ministry. Walther's repeated use of the phrase "das geistliche Priesterthum" signaled this connection early on.[108] Lutherans were not entirely immune from the larger American discussions—Loy's use of the phrase "the priesthood of all believers" may suggest some acculturation to broader American usage, but he did not quite mean by it what other non-Lutherans would later understand it to be. For the most part, Lutherans in America seemed to play a scant role in the popular American appropriation of the common priesthood in the second half of the nineteenth century or early twentieth century.

Further Developments and Concluding Thoughts

Schaff and others like him succeeded in making the priesthood of all believers a commonplace of Protestant identity by the early twentieth century in America. This was a triumph, in some respects, of what I have described as the second strand of thinking on the common priesthood from the latter half of the nineteenth century that can be traced back to Neander and Bunsen. It was rooted in

the Reformation and Luther, to be sure, but less so than the first strand that emerged out of seventeenth-century Lutheranism and Pietism, and this first strand was much more entangled with the appropriation of Luther's writings and the Lutheran tradition on the theology of the ordained office. Helped along by Schaff, this second strand of the common priesthood was tied to a sense of Protestant cultural superiority over and against Catholicism and a sometimes facile identification of the common priesthood with American and republican ideals. This emphasis on the common priesthood was a remarkable shift from the views of Luther and the Reformation in the early American republic, in which it played, at best, a negligible role.

The growing acceptance of the common priesthood as part of American Protestant identity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was not especially sophisticated. There were real weaknesses in Schaff's arguments, through which he made the common priesthood central to his understanding of Protestantism in America and a logical consequence of the Reformation. Indeed, the much more theological arguments raised by Lutherans about its importance in understanding the ministry or ecclesiology were not of particular interest to him. In 1909, Charles Augustus Briggs, who had been Schaff's colleague at Union Seminary and is best known for his very public excommunication from the Presbyterian Church in 1893 for his modernist views of the Bible, questioned whether Schaff's characteristic elements of Protestantism, especially the common priesthood, held up. Briggs, who became an Episcopal priest after his expulsion from the Presbyterians, argued that Roman Catholics and the Council of Trent never denied the universal or royal priesthood and that their arguments had rather been against the misuse of the "Protestant doctrine of the priesthood of believers."[109] And in a book published a year after Briggs' death in 1914, his criticisms of Schaff are even more pointed, questioning whether Schaff's interpretation of Luther and the Reformation on the common priesthood were really so accurate, as well as reiterating his earlier argument that Protestants and Catholics agree on "the Biblical principle of the royal Priesthood."[110] Briggs is not necessarily representative of broader Protestant positions at that point,

but his dissent points to the growing scholarly debate on what the common priesthood meant for understanding Luther and the Reformation as well as broader conceptions of Protestantism in the United States during the twentieth century.

Some Baptists and Evangelicals in America would take the common priesthood in new directions in the twentieth century. Malcolm Yarnell has described how E. Y. Mullins, the long-term leader of the Southern Baptist Seminary and considered by many to be the re-founder of the Southern Baptist Convention, was influenced by Schaff and used the priesthood of all believers in the early twentieth century as a way of drawing Southern Baptists together. At the same time he also claimed a place for these Baptists as a mainstream denomination in America, in part by tying the priesthood of all believers to ostensible American notions of religious liberty.[111] Yarnell is highly critical of Mullins's individualistic interpretation of the common priesthood, but there is no doubt that it has become central to Baptist debates, leading Timothy George to observe wryly that it had displaced biblical inerrancy as the "hottest item of dispute" among Southern Baptists by the 1980s.[112] Some even speak of a specifically "Baptist doctrine of the Priesthood of All Believers."[113] And it has remained a controverted Baptist notion well into the twenty-first century where differing interpretations of it are at the center of many Baptist debates on congregational authority and women's ordination.[114] This conception remains tethered to Luther and the Reformation in most authors but often only superficially.

This appreciation is not limited to Baptists. Many non-denominational Evangelicals have adopted it as well, such as Bill Hybels, but there are also many others from a range of traditions. Contemporary Quaker theologians such as Stephen Angell refer to it as a "bedrock" principle of Quakerism.[115] Methodists draw from it on both sides of the Atlantic, as do many Presbyterians.[116] Of course, there is occasional pushback. T. F. Torrance decried "the ruinous individualism" implicit in the phrase priesthood of all believers, a charge that comes up periodically among Evangelicals as well.[117] And yet as a broad concept it continues to have an impact, witnessed by books with a practical theological bent that continue to be published year after year.[118]

Lutheran discussions in America were shaped largely by the Lutheran confessions, the authority of Luther, and a concern for the ordained office. Even as they may have argued for and against a broader understanding of the common priesthood, their arguments tended to revolve around what I have described as the first strand and the terms set by the Lutheran tradition, rather than the broader Protestant arguments of the second strand. Unconstrained by the Lutheran confessions and tradition, other Protestants in America could discuss the common priesthood in quite different ways, even if they employed the same or similar terminology. Indeed, one of the ongoing misunderstandings surrounding the common priesthood is that there is an identifiable doctrine or even a shared conception of what this may have meant theologically and culturally over time. Instead, there are multiple discourses in which the same phrase can signify divergent meanings, often with implications that depend on the context and the socio-theological commitments of participants. Accordingly, the prominence of the common priesthood has waxed and waned since the sixteenth century.

This multiplicity of meaning points to further research. I have endeavored to show how the common priesthood became "Americanized" in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and earned a place in the larger Protestant lexicon. Its ongoing relevance in both Lutheran and broader Protestant circles well into the twenty-first century raises additional questions of how the common priesthood/priesthood of all believers continued to shape the broader understandings of Protestant and even Catholic conceptions of laity and ministry.[119] The increasing attention to the study of Luther in the twentieth century in the so-called "Luther renaissance" and then in the post-war growth of ecumenical Reformation research fueled new investigations of Luther's understanding of the common priesthood that are still not resolved. At the same time, the priesthood of all believers has taken on a significance in popular religious discussions that while not entirely immune from more scholarly conversations has its own momentum. Why does the common priesthood or perhaps better the priesthood of all believers, a phrase that almost all associate with Luther, persist across denominational and ideological lines, even if many advocates accept almost nothing else from

his theology? How have Lutherans responded as a seemingly core Lutheran concept is appropriated in ways that would have surprised and even shocked earlier Lutheran theologians? Why do some modern Protestants across the ideological spectrum seek to draw expressly on priestly language in an increasingly secular age? The complex legacy of the common priesthood provides a rich field for probing Protestant identity and reveals a complex if troublesome legacy. They are not questions that can be resolved on historical theological grounds alone but may be ones that a broad cultural investigation of origins, development, and reception of a Reformation slogan may help us grasp.

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NOTES

1. Bill Hybels, *The Volunteer Revolution* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2004), 59–65.

2. The phrase "priesthood of all believers" appears frequently among Lutheran theologians and official church documents of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Lutheran-Church Missouri Synod. For a cautionary argument on facile applications of it in Lutheran contexts, see Timothy J. Wengert, *Priesthood, Pastors, Bishops: Public Ministry for the Reformation and Today* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008).

3. Wengert, *Priesthood,* 1–2.

4. *Luthers Werke*, Kritische Gesamtausgabe, 73 vols., eds. J. F. K. Knaake et al. (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1883–2009), 8:254 (Hereafter cited as WA). *Luther's Works*, American Edition, 80 vols., eds. Jaroslav Pelikan, Helmut T. Lehmann, and Christopher Boyd Brown (St. Louis and Philadelphia: Concordia and Fortress Press, 1955ff.), 39:237 (Hereafter cited as LW).

5. WA 8:539; LW 36:200.

6. WA 41:210; LW 13:332. Translation modified.

7. For a classic but problematic treatment as a "doctrine," see, for instance, Cyril Eastwood, *The Priesthood of All Believers: An Examination of the Doctrine from the Reformation to the Present Day* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1960).

8. See for instance, Nathan Montover, *Luther's Revolution: The Political Dimensions of Martin Luther's Universal Priesthood* (Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick Press, 2011). Stephen M. Squires, "Absolution and the Universal Priesthood from Luther to Spener" (Th.D. diss.,

Boston University, 2013). Goertz provides an extensive list of articles and monographs relating to the theme over the last twenty years. Harald Goertz, *Allgemeines Priestertum und Ordiniertes Amt bei Luther,* 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2020), 361–364.

9. Goertz, *Allgemeines Priestertum;* Martin Krarup, *Ordination in Wittenberg: Die Einsetzung in das kirchliche Amt in Kursachsen zur Zeit der Reformation* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2007); Wengert, *Priesthood (see n. 3 above).*

10. See for instance, Luther's *Commentary on Psalm 110* based on sermons delivered in 1535 and published in 1539; *The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests*, (1533). For a late expression identified by Roger Whittall, see also his 1544 "Sermon at the Dedication of the Castle Church in Torgau," LW 51:335, as discussed in Roger Whittall, "Boundaries and Horizons: Luther on the Church and its Priesthood," *Lutheran Theological Journal* 55 (2021): 127–38. These materials are expanded in Whittal's forthcoming book, *We Are All Priests: The Ecclesiological Boundaries and Horizons of Martin Luther's Common Priesthood* (Rowman and Littlefield).

11. In his commentary on the 110th Psalm (1535/39), Luther described these functions succinctly: "Hence the priestly office consists of three parts: to teach or preach God's Word, to sacrifice, and to pray." LW 13:315. See also LW 13:332. The full theological ramifications of Luther's theology regarding the common priesthood cannot be developed here. For various perspectives, see also, in addition to Wengert, Goertz, and Karap cited above, Hans-Martin Barth, *Einander Priester sein: Allgemeines Priestertum in ökumenischer Perspektive* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 29–53 and Volker Leppin, "Priestertum aller Gläubigen: Amt und Ehrenamt in der lutherischen Kirche," in *Luther heute: Ausstrahlungen der Wittenberger Reformation*, eds. Ulrich Heckel et al., (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 149–169.

12. For instance, the theologians at Augsburg, led by Melanchthon, determined that this topic could be omitted from the recently submitted Augsburg Confession along with several others as burdening the Evangelical princes with unnecessary issues that could well spark a visceral reaction from their opponents. *Melanchthons Briefwechsel*, eds. Heinz Scheible and Johanna Loehr (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: frommann-holzboog Verlag, 2007) 962, Texte 4/1:343–46.

13. The closest reference is in the "Tractatus de potestate et primatu Papae" in which Melanchthon invokes 1 Peter 2:9 and the royal priesthood in a limited way to support the church's ability to elect and ordain ministers. No other functions or duties of the common priesthood are suggested. *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, eds. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 341. Leiburg argues that the common priesthood here is only to be understood in the narrow sense of justifying the *jus ecclesiae* to ordain ministers. Hellmut Lieberg, *Amt und Ordination bei Luther und Melanchthon* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962), 265–266. Some, however, identify it as implicit in the Lutheran confessions. See Erling Teigen, "The Universal Priesthood in the Lutheran Confessions," *Logia*, 1:1 (1992): 11–17, and Gudrun Neebe, "Allgemeines Priestertum bei Luther und in den lutherischen Bekenntnisschriften," in *Christus berufen: Amt und allgemeines Priestertum in lutherischer Perspektive*, ed. Reinhard Rittner (Hannover: Luth. Verl.-Haus, 2001), 57–79.

14. Chyrträus delineates six priestly functions parallel to those of Luther in *De Instituendis ministris ecclesiae*. (See WA 12:169–196.) Chyträus published *De Sacrificiis* as a preface to his commentary on Leviticus: *In Leviticum, Seu tertium Librum Mosis, complectentem unius Mensis Historiam, Videlicet: Leges De Sacrificiis Et Discrimine mundorum et immundorum, et res*

alias in Ecclesia populi Israel gestas (Wittenberg, 1569), 1–108; see the section on the common priesthood, 54–71. For an English translation, see David Chytraeus, *On Sacrifice: A Reformation Treatise in Biblical Theology* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1962), 88–102. On Chyrträus and the common priesthood, see also Stephen M. Squires, "Absolution and the Universal Priesthood from Luther to Spener" (Th.D. diss., Boston University, 2013), 248–252.

15. Tilemann Heshusius, *Heuptartickel Christlicher Lehre/ Ordentlich in Predigten gefasset* (Helmstedt, 1584), 785; Philipp Nicolai, *Grundfest und richtige Erklerung Deß streitigen Artickels von der Gegenwart unsers Säligmachers Jesu Christi nach beyden Naturen/ im Himmel und auff Erden / Zu verhütung deß Calvinische[n] Schwarms und rechter Einnemung der reinen Warheit/ in Frag und Antwort verfasset Durch Philippum Nicolai D.* (Hamburg, 1604).

16. [Joachim Betke,] *Mensio Christianismi Et Ministerii Germaniae: Das ist/ Geistliche Abmessung unsers heutigen Christenthumbs und Predigampts/ ob beydes Christisch und Apostolisch sey*, (1636). Joachim Betke, *Sacerdotium, Hoc Est, New-Testamentisches Königliches Priesterthumb/ auß dem Typischen fleissig herauß gesucht/ und unserm fast Priester-losem Christenthumb zum Unterricht und Nutzen auffgesetzet*, (1640). Betke published the *Mensio* anonymously, though his authorship was widely known in Berlin and elsewhere.

17. On Betke, see Lothar Noack, "Betke, Joachim" in *Bio-Bibliographien: Brandenburgische Gelehrte der Frühren Neuzeit Mark Brandenburg mit Berlin-Cölln 1506–1640*, eds. Lothar Noack and Jürgen Splett (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2009), 12–22. The older work by Margaret Bornemann, "Der mystische Spiritualist Joachim Betke (1601–1663) und seine Theologie," (Diss., Kirchliche Hochschule zu Berlin, 1959), is valuable for its analysis of his published works.

18. Johann Vilitz, *Regale Sacerdotium, Das ist: Die hochnötige und zugleich anmütige heilsame Lehre/ Von dem Geist- und Königlichem Priesterthumb* (Quedlinburg, 1639). Vilitz's work appeared in at least six editions between 1639 and 1670.

19. Philipp Jacob Spener, *Pia Desideria*, in *Die Werke Philipp Jakob Speners*, vol. 1, *Die Grundschriften*, eds. Beate Köster and Kurt Aland (Gießen: Brunnen 1996), 206–209. In 1670, Spener also had Vilitz's *Regale Sacerdotium* reprinted: Johann Vilitz, *Regale Sacerdotium, Das ist: Die hochnöthige und zugleich anmuthige heilsame Lehre/ Von dem Geist- und Königlichem Priesterthum* (Frankfurt/Main, 1670).

20. Philipp Jacob Spener, *Das Geistliche Priesterthum / Auß Göttlichem Wort Kürtzlich beschrieben, und mit einstimmenden Zeugnüssen Gottseliger Lehrer bekräfftiget* (Frankfurt/Main, 1677).

21. Cited here after the critical edition in *Die Werke Philipp Jakob Speners,* 1:439. On Spener and the common priesthood, see Jonathan Strom, "The Common Priesthood and the Pietist Challenge for Ministry and Laity," in *The Pietist Impulse in Christianity,* eds. Christian Collins Winn et al. (Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick, 2011), 42–58.

22. Martin Greschat, *Zwischen Tradition und neuer Anfang. Ernst Valentin Löscher und der Ausgang der lutherischen Orthodoxie* (Witten: Luther-Verlag, 1971), 193, 269–270.

23. For examples, see Heinz Renkewitz, *Hochmann von Hochenau (1670–1721): Quellenstudien zur Geschichte des Pietismus* (Breslau: Maruschke & Berendt, 1935 [reprint Witten: Luther-Verlag, 1969]), 94–96 and Johann Georg Gichtel, *Erbauliche theosophische Send-Schreiben* (Bethulia [fictive], 1710), V:659. See also Jeff Bach, *Voices 7ft he Turtledoves: The Sacred World of Ephrata* (University Park, Pa.: Penn State, 2003), 56, and Marcus Meier, *Die Schwarzenauer Neutäufer: Genese einer Gemeindebildung zwischen Pietismus und Täufertum* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), 79, who traces it to Jane Leade.

24. For Lange's explanation ft he spiritual priesthood, see Joachim Lange, *Der richtige Mittel-Straße Zwischen den Irrthümern und Abwege* (Halle, 1714), 4:169–189. For Löscher's criticism of the spiritual priesthood as an office (*Amt*) and vocation even if only exercised privately, see Valentin Ernst Löscher, *Vollständiger Timotheus Verinus Oder Darlegung der Wahrheit und des Friedens,* vol. 2 (Wittenberg, 1722), 82–83.

25. See, for instance, Christian Thomasius, *Vernünftige und Christliche aber nicht Scheinheilige Thomasische Gedancken und Erinnerung Uber Gemischte Philosophische und Juristische Händel,* vol. 3 (Halle, 1725), 757–758. See also Christoph Strohm, "Luther-Rezeption bei dem Juristen Christian Thomasius," in *Das Bild der Reformation in der Aufklärung*, eds. Wolf-Dieter Schäufele and Christoph Strohm (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2017), 252–278, 261–266.

26. See Steinmetz's introductory remarks to *Das Geistlichen Priesterthum*, in Philipp Jakob Spener, *Kleine Geistliche Schriften,* ed. Johann Adam Steinmetz, 2 vols. (Magdeburg and Leipzig, 1741), 1:613–614.

27. Eastwood, *The Priesthood of All Believers*.

28. A contemporaneous counterpoint to Eastwood would be T. F. Torrance, who saw the royal priesthood largely in corporate terms and criticized the formulation "the priesthood of all believers." T. F. Torrance, *The Royal Priesthood* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1955), 35.

29. As one example, he identifies, among the Puritans, Thomas Cartwright (1535–1603) as a main witness. Eastwood, *The Priesthood of All Believers,* 132–142. Cartwright made a strong argument for reading and interpretation of Scripture among the laity—both men and women—against clerical claims to restrict authority. Cartwright grounds his argument deeply in scripture and the early church fathers but nowhere does he make reference to any broader notion of the common priesthood, apart from one very brief allusion that Christians are "priests unto God in Jesus Christ" that is not central to his argument. Thomas Cartwright, *The answere to the preface of the Rhemish testament* (Edinburgh, 1602), 96. Elsewhere he makes a brief reference to 1 Peter 2:9 that all Christians are "kingly priests" but it is perfunctory, and he quickly moves to assert the sole priesthood of Christ in his subsequent explanation. See, for instance, Thomas Cartwright, *Confutation of the Rhemists: Translation, Glosses, and Annotations on the New Testament* ([London], 1618), 670. In a similar approach, Rushdoony unconvincingly also infers the priesthood of all believers from Puritan texts that do not cite it or other forms of the common priesthood but do assert certain lay prerogatives, especially authority with regard to scripture. Rousas John Rushdoony, "The Puritan Doctrine of the Priesthood of All Believers," *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction* 6 (1979): 22–37.

30. See n. 31 above.

31. Bernd Moeller's quip that "The 'church' as an institution was composed in practice of only a single estate, that of the pastors" in the early seventeenth century, may be an exaggeration but contains an element of truth about the dominance of the clergy at the time that Betke and others sought to reform through greater lay involvement. Bernd Moeller, *Ökumenische Kirchengeschichte,* vol. 2, *Mittelalter and Reformation,* eds. R. Kottje and B. Moeller (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald and Munich: Kaiser, 1973), 430.

32. On Luther's reception among Puritans, see David Parry, "' Lutherus non vidit Omnia': the ambivalent reception of Luther in English Puritanism," in *Luther and Calvinism*, eds. Herman J. Selderhuis and J. Marius J. Lange van Ravenswaay (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017), 379–407.

33. Paul Lim describes the wide use of "priestcraft" in the seventeenth century from Baxter to Hobbes. Paul Lim, *Mystery Unveiled: The Crisis of the Trinity in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 221–223. See also J. A. I. Champion, *The Pillars of Priestcraft Shaken: The Church of England and its Enemies, 1660–1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

34. See Lorenzo Dow, *Analects of the Rights of Man*, in *All the Polemical Works of Lorenzo Dow* (New York, 1814), 202; Robert Mackenzie Beverley, *The Heresy of a Human Priesthood* (London, 1839), 34.

35. In his autobiography, Cotton Mather refers several times to a "heavenly priesthood" and "royal priesthood," but this represents an expectation of blessedness or an elect status rather than a common priesthood. Cotton Mather, *Paterna: The Autobiography of Cotton Mather,* ed. Ronald Bosco (Delmar, N.Y.: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1976), 252, 258. Wendell labels Cotton Mather a "Puritan Priest" though his usage has a definitive mocking character and critical implication. See Barret Wendell, *Cotton Mather: The Puritan Priest* (New York, 1891), esp. 303–304. However, in his analysis of 1 Peter 2 and Rev 1 in his massive *Biblia Americana*, Mather pay almost no attention to the common or royal priesthood. Cotton Mather, *Biblia Americana: America's First Bible Commentary*, vol. 10, *Hebrews-Revelations*, ed. Jan Stievermann (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2023), 341–343, 447.

36. Jonathan Edwards, "Christians a Chosen Generation," in *Sermons and Discourses, 1730–1733*, ed. Mark Valeri, *Works of Jonathan Edwards* 17 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 276–328.

37. On Edwards's conflict and ultimate dismissal from Northampton, see George Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards* (New Haven: Yale, 2003), 357–369.

38. In the *Detailed Reports*, Johann Martin Boltzius can occasionally refer to "the spiritual priesthood" especially with regard to the household in the context of the Ebenezer community in Georgia. See, for instance, Samuel Urlsperger, *Detailed Reports on the Salzburger Emigrants Who Settled in America,* vol. 15, *1751–1752*, ed. George Fenwick Jones (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1990), p. 207.

39. Riforgiato noted: "Since he tended to elevate the ministry to a somewhat superior level, he did not emphasize as Spener and Francke did the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers." Leonard Riforgiato, *Missionary of Moderation: Henry Melchior Muhlenberg and the Lutheran Church in English America* (Lewisburg, Pa.: Bucknell University Press, 1980), 151–152. I have found no reference to the common priesthood or royal priesthood in his journals. There is one reference to the royal priesthood in his *Korrespondenz*, vol. 4, *1769–1776*, 61–62, but no meaningful reference to the common or spiritual priesthood. Kuenning sees the spiritual priesthood at work in Muhlenberg but provides no citation; Paul Kuenning, *The Rise and Fall of American Lutheran Pietism: The Rejection of an Activist Heritage* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer, 1988), 45.

40. Schmucker alluded to Rev 1:6 as Christians being made "kings and priests unto God" but in the context of describing a heavenly not earthly condition. Samuel Simon Schmucker, *Elements of Popular Theology* (New York, 1834), 320. On Schmucker's theology, see E. Brooks Holifield, *Theology in America: Christian Thought from the Age of the Puritans to the Civil War* (New Haven: Yale, 2003), 402–411 and Abdul Ross Wentz, *Pioneer in Christian Unity: Samuel Simon Schmucker* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967) .

41. Hartmut Lehmann, "Entdeckung Luthers im Amerika des frühen 19. Jahrhunderts," in *Luther in der Neuzeit,* ed. Bernd Moeller (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Mohn, 1982), 151–159.

42. *The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 6 vols, ed. Ralph L. Rusk (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), 1:li. Later in the 1840s Emerson became quite ambivalent about Luther. See p. 119 of the same book.

43. See, for instance, Thomas Bayley Fox, *A Sketch of the Reformation* (Boston, 1836); James Sabine, *An Ecclesiastical History: From the Commencement of the Christian Era to the Present Time* (Boston, 1820); George Cubitt, *The Life of Martin Luther: To which is Prefixed an Expository Essay on the Lutheran Reformation* (New York, 1844); and Barnas Sears, *The life of Luther : with special reference to its earlier periods and the opening scenes of the Reformation* (Philadelphia, 1850). One biography referred briefly to Luther's position against the papacy that "every priest was a layman and every layman a priest," but this was a fleeting reference. Hannah Farnham Sawyer, *The Life and Times of Martin Luther* (Boston, 1839), 244. D'Aubigne, whom Lehmann identified as an important influence on early American views of the Reformation, gave Luther credit for reviving the "universal priesthood" but argued that it lived on only in Reformed contexts. J. H. Merle d'Aubignè, *History of the Great Reformation in Germany, Switzerland, etc.* (New York, 1846), 339.

44. Johann Matthias Schröckh, *Christliche Kirchengeschichte seit der Reformation*, vol. 8 (Leipzig, 1808), 261.

45. In a disputation in honor of the Reformation, one of the points to be "debated" in Memmingen was, "Es giebt nur ein einziges geistliches Priesterthum, und alle Gläubigen haben daran theil (There is only one spiritual priesthood, and all believers have a part in it)." See Jacob Friedrich Unold, *Reformationsgeschichte der Stadt Memmingen: zum Andenken an das dritte Reformations-Jubiläum* (Memmingen, 1817), 26.

46. On the occasion of the 1817 jubilees, Harms composed 95 of his own theses critical of the current state of the Lutheran church. Among the issues he raised were greater clerical control and the authority of priestly duties over and against the laity, especially in theses 86, 90, and 91. See Friedrich Andersen, *Claus Harms und seine Thesen nach hundert Jahren Zum Reformationsjubiläum* (Lunden, 1917), 55–56, where the theses are reproduced. See also Harms' inaugural sermon in Kiel, "Was ein Prediger obliege," in Claus Harms, *Zwey Predigten* (Kiel, 1817), 19–37. Harms explicitly identified the ministerial office with priestly attributes. Later Harms would oppose Neander's interpretation of the common priesthood. Claus Harms, *Pastoral-Theologie: In Reden an Theologiestudirende*, vol 2: *Der Priester, wie ihn die Pastoral-Theologie seyn und thun lehret hinsichtlich des öffentlichen* (Stuttgart: Hausmann, 1834), 19.

47. *Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung* 4 (1827): 28, 29; 18 (1827): 139; 15 (1828): 150.

48. Philipp Jacob Spener, *Das Geistliche Priesterthum aus göttlichem Wort kürzlich beschrieben und mit einstimmenden Zeugnissen gottseeliger Lehrer bekräftiget,* ed. C. Fr. W. Wilke (Berlin, 1830). The unsigned review appeared in *Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung* 29 (1831): 230–232.

49. *Der Christen-Bote* 16 (1833): 79.

50. Jan Carsten Schnurr, *Weltreiche und Wahrheitszeugen: Geschichtsbilder der protestantischen Erweckungsbewegung in Deutschland 1815–1848* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 243. *Der Christen-Bote* 16 (1846): 531.

51. On Hengstenberg's criticism of a broad understanding of the common priesthood, see *Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung* 49 (1846): 425–26. Others in the *Erweckungsbewegung* also wanted to see a narrowing of the common priesthood to a special number of true or converted Christians. See, for instance, von Kapff who stressed that the common priesthood of all believers is relevant only to those who truly believe. He distinguished this sharply from

"the common priesthood of democratic church-republicans" that has no basis in scripture or reason. Sixtus Carl von Kapff, *Die innere Mission unter den Geistlichen* (1851), 29.

52. "Each person is a priest to the extent that he draws others to himself in the field that he has specially made his own and in which he can present himself as a virtuoso, each is a layperson to the extent that he follows the art and direction of another where he himself is a stranger in religion. There is none of that tyrannical aristocracy you describe so maliciously: this society is a priestly people, a perfect republic, where each alternately leads and is led; each follows in the other the same power that he also feels in himself and with which he rules others." Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*, trans. and ed. Richard Crouter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 76.

53. Christine Helmer, "The Common Priesthood: Luther's Enduring Challenge," in *Remembering the Reformation: Martin Luther and Catholic Theology,* eds. Gesa Elsbeth Thiessen et al. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017), 219. Corrie goes further and sees Schleiermacher transforming the priesthood of all believers in the *Speeches* into a "republican institutional structure." Elizabeth Corrie, "Individual, Communication and Community in the Work of Friedrich Schleiermacher" (PhD. Diss., Emory University, 2002), 56.

54. See Diana Behler, "Lessing's Legacy to the Romantic Concept of the Poet-Priest," *Lessing Yearbook* 4 (1972): 67–93. A. Leslie Willson, "Dichter Priester. Bestandteil der Romantik," *Colloquia Germanica* 1 (1968): 127–136. Willson emphasizes especially the importance of Indian models for the Romantics.

55. Several in Schleiermacher's circle were attracted to Catholicism. See Richard Crouter, *Schleiermacher: Between Enlightenment and Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 183.

56. In the second edition of the *Glaubenslehre* (1830–31), he described the concept of "des christlichen Priesterthums (the Christian priesthood)" and referred to baptism as "die Weihe zu dem wahren allen Christen gemeinsamen Priesterthum (the consecration to the true priesthood common to all Christians)." Friederich Schleiermacher, *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Abteilung 1: *Schriften und Entwürfe*, ed. Hans-Joachim Birkner et al. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1980–) 13.2: 399, 405.

57. Schleiermacher stressed that no one is better than Christ and thus "all others are sinners" but nevertheless these still belong to the priesthood. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Abteilung 3: *Predigten*, ed. Hans-Joachim Birkner et al., (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1980–), 10:241.

58. Neander saw Schleiermacher as instrumental in his own turn to Christianity but also saw his work as a "stepping stone" to a more sophisticated theological position. See introduction to *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*, ed. John Oman (London, 1893), xi, lvi.

59. August Neander, *Der heilige Johannes Chrysostomus und die Kirche, besonders des Orients in dessen Zeitalter* (Berlin, 1821), 22.

60. August Neander, *Denkwürdigkeiten aus der Geschichte des Christenthums und des christlichen Lebens,* (Berlin, 1825), 1:421–424.

61. Schaff was referring to Neander's *General History of the Christian Religion and Church,* trans. Joseph Torrey, 5 vols. (Boston, 1847–1859). Philip Schaff, *Neander: Erinnerungen* (Gotha, 1886), 32.

62. August Neander, *Das Eine und Mannichfaltige des christlichen Lebens* (Berlin, 1840), 62, 158, 286–87.

63. Wichern wrote about his visit with Neander in 1841 in which they enthusiastically agreed that the common priesthood of believers (*das allgemeine Priestertum der Gläubigen*) was vital for the mission of the church to reach those who had been excluded from the church. Adelbert Wiegand, *August Neanders Leben: Dargestellt für Studierende der Theologie und jüngere Geistliche zum 100-jährigen Geburtstage Neanders* (Erfurt, 1889), 70.

64. Joshua Bennett, "August Neander and the Religion of History in the Nineteenth-Century 'Priesthood of Letters'" *The Historical Journal* 63 (2020): 633–659, 649.

65. August Neander, "Der verflossene halbe Jahrhundert in seinem Verhältniss zur Gegenwart," *Deutsche Zeitschrift für christliche Wissenschaft und christliches Leben* 1 (1850): 3–29, 9. This was a common theme of the early issues of this journal. See also Neander's article "Ueber die Sonntagsfeier," *Deutsche Zeitschrift für christliche Wissenschaft und christliches Leben* 27 (1850): 212. On Neander's disappointments with proposed reforms in 1846, see also Bennett, "August Neander," 649.

66. Samuel Keeley, "Spirit of Power: Bunsen and the Anglo-Prussian Axis of Protestantism, 1815–1860" (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 2019), 162.

67. Frank Foerster, *Christian Carl Josias Bunsen: Diplomat, Mäzen und Vordenker in Wissenschaft, Kirche, und Politik* (Bad Arolsen: Waldeckisher Geschichtsverein, 2001), 50–51; Keely, "Spirit of Power," 13–14.

68. Christian Carl Josias von Bunsen, *Versuch eines allgemeinen Gesang und Gebetbuchs, 1833* (Hamburg, 1833), xxi (preface).

69. Christian Carl Josias von Bunsen, *Die Verfassung der Kirche der Zukunft. Praktische Erläuterungen zu dem Briefwechsel über die deutsche Kirche, das Episkopat und Jerusalem* (Hamburg, 1845). See Hengstenberg's criticism, especially of Bunsen's inclusion of laity in the decision-making structures of the church. *Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung* 48 (1846): 417–420. However, Bunsen's vision of lay engagement in Protestant churches was more broadly conceived than that.

70. On the importance of Neander for Schaff, see Stephen Graham, *Cosmos in the Chaos: Philip Schaff's Interpretation of Nineteenth-Century American Religion* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1995), 5–6. Hans-Martin Thimme, *Philip Schaff (1819–1893): Atlantischer Theologe und ökumenischer Visionär* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2015), 44–45.

71. For a concise overview of the Mercersburg theology, see E. Brooks Holifield, *Theology in America: Christian Thought from the Age of the Puritans to the Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003) 467–481.

72. Philip Schaff, *The Principle of Protestantism as Related to the Present State of the Church*, trans. John Nevin (Chambersburg, Pa., 1845), 125.

73. Quotations from the English edition: *Philip Schaff, America: A Sketch of its Political, Social, and Religious Character,* ed. Perry Miller (Cambridge: Mass.: Belknap Press, 1961), 14.

74. Schaff, *America,* 88.

75. See, for instance, Philip Schaff, *History of the Apostolic Church* (New York, 1853), 506–507. P[hilipp] S[chaff], "Neander as Church Historian," *Mercersburg Review* 4 (1852): 564–577, 572.

76. Schaff, *America*, 114.

77. See *Friends' Review* 1858 (vol. 10, 51). There were further references in 1859, and then throughout the 1860s and 1870s. This reference to the universal priesthood supplanting a professional employment (namely, professional ministry) comes from 1864.

> This doctrine of the priesthood of all believers in Christ is a great and energizing truth. Under its power the preaching and spreading of the

> Gospel, instead of being a *professional employment*, in which one individual is appointed to the charge and instruction of a whole congregation, becomes rather a 'work of faith and labor of love,' in which the distinction of clergy and laity is unknown, but in which all the children of God are called to participate, according to the nature of the talents committed to them. And in the exercise of these gifts and talents the individuals to whom they are entrusted and the Church at large are alike profited.

78. Gerhard Lindemann, *Für Frömmigkeit in Freiheit: Die Geschichte der Evangelischen Allianz im Zeitalter des Liberalismus (1846–1879)* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2011), 419.

79. "The Berlin Conference of 1857," *The Methodist Quarterly Review* 10 (1858): 427.

80. *The Southern Review* 19 (1876): 457.

81. Anne Darling Price, *A History of the Formation and Growth of the Reformed Episcopal Church, 1873–1902* (Philadelphia: Armstrong, 1902), 126. For an early elaboration on the Reformed Episcopal understanding of the common priesthood, see William Nicholson, *The Priesthood of the Church of God: Sermon Preached at the Opening of the Fourth General Council of the Reformed Episcopal Church* (Philadelphia, 1876). http://anglicanhistory.org/usa/rec/nicholson_priesthood1876.html

82. Protestant commentors frequently cited the contrast of the common priesthood favorably to Catholicism's hierarchical nature. See, for instance, *The Methodist Review* 15 (1899): 179. See also the remarks of Maveety and Haldeman below.

83. Hodge preached at least two sermons on the topic in 1857 and 1863. Charles Hodge, *Princeton Sermons: Outlines of Discourses, Doctrinal and Practical* (London, 1879), 192–195. See also, "The Idea of the Church," *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review* 25 (1853): 346.

84. Quakers saw Bunsen's use of the common priesthood as having an affinity with their historical tradition. *Friends' Intelligencer*, vol. 35:33 (1878): 515.

85. Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom, with a History and Critical Notes*, 3 vols. (New York, 1877) 1:206–207.

86. The common priesthood was a topic of several lectures in the 1857 Berlin conference of the Evangelical Alliance; see Lindemann, *Für Frömmigkeit in Freiheit*, 419.

87. Philip Schaff, "Discord and Concord," in *Christ and Christianity* (New York, 1885), 294–295.

88. Philip Schaff, "Principles of the Reformation," in *Christ and Christianity*, 133. This was an 1883 address to the students at Union in honor of the 400th anniversary of Luther's birth.

89. Thomas Lindsay, *The Reformation* (Edinburgh, 1883), 186–187.

90. Reprint editions continued into the 1970s. On his long-reaching influence, see Donald McKim, "Thomas Martin Lindsay," in *Historians of the Christian Tradition: Their Methodology and Influence on Western Thought*, eds. Michael Bauman and Martin Klauber (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995), 351–375.

91. P. J. Maveety, "Why I am a Protestant," *Epworth Herald,* November 2, 1901, vol. 7, no. 1, 542.

92. Isaac Massey Haldeman, *The Signs of the Times*, 4th ed. (New York: Charles C. Cook, 1913), 254.

93. J. J. Haley, *Debates that Made History* (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1920), 149.

94. U.S. Department of Commerce, *Religious Bodies: 1926*, vol. 2, *Separate Denominations* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1929), 257.

95. Arthur Cushman McGiffert, "Luther and the Unfinished Reformation," in *Three Addresses Delivered in the Chapel of the Union Theological Seminary in Commemoration of the Four Hundredth Anniversary of the Reformation* (New York, 1917), 9.

96. In a contrast to Merle d'Aubigne, Smith blamed Reformed theologians, especially Calvin, for killing "Luther's doctrine of the priesthood of all believers." Preserved Smith, *The Age of the Reformation* (New York: Henry Holt, 1920), 165.

97. In the German edition of his lectures on religion in America, Schaff remarked somewhat dismissively on this debate, especially the position of Grabau: Philip Schaff, *Amerika: Die politischen, sozialen, und kirchlich-religiösen Zustände der Vereinigten Staaten von Nord-Amerika* (Berlin, 1854), 224–225. This section was not, however, included in the English publication.

98. Walther, for instance, stated, "Although accordingly then the common spiritual priesthood (*das allgemeine geistliche Priesterthum*) and the public office of ministry (*Predigamt*) are not one and the same, the latter is however the fruit of the first." C. F. W Walther, *Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt* (Erlangen, 1852), 356. Walther quotes Luther on the common priesthood extensively on pp. 360–369. On Walther and Grabau, see Benjamin T.G. Mayes, "Grabau versus Walther: The Use of the Book of Concord in the American Debate on Church and Ministry in the Nineteenth Century," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 75 (2011): 217–252, 237.

99. Todd Nichol, "Ministry and Oversight in American Lutheranism," in *Called and Ordained: Lutheran Perspectives on the Office of Ministry*, eds. Todd Nichol and Marc Kolden (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989), 93–113. He especially stresses the "considerable consensus of essentials of a doctrine of ministry" among American Lutheran theologians though they disagreed on some elements, including the transference theory advocated by Walther (104).

100. Matthias Loy, "The Ministerial Office," *Evangelical Review* 13 (1862): 199–248. This essay later appeared in Matthias Loy, *Essay on the Ministerial Office: An Exposition of the Scriptural Doctrine as Taught by the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Columbus, Ohio, 1870).

101. Krauth refers to the common priesthood briefly. Charles Portfield Krauth, *The Conservative Reformation and its Theology* (Philadelphia, 1871), 152, 177. On Krauth and resistance to lay involvement in governance of the church, see Nichol, "Ministry and Oversight," 97–98.

102. Jacobs cites Luther on this at several points. Henry E. Jacobs, *Martin Luther: Hero of the Reformation* (New York, 1898), 157, 374–375, but Jacobs was also quick to point out how it could be misused by radicals, 305.

103. Weidner interpreted the common priesthood as limited only to sacrifice and prayer in his outlines and explicitly rejected a transference from universal priesthood to the ministry. Revere Franklin Weidner, *The Doctrine of the Ministry: Outline Notes Based on Luthardt and Krauth* (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell, 1907), 20.

104. "Luther League of Pennsylvania," *Luther League Review* 20 (October 1907): 12–13. The connection to the Inner Mission and the common priesthood likely derives from Wichern, who made the common priesthood central to his work in the German *Innere Mission*. See especially his "Die Innere Mission—eine Denkschrift" (1849) in Johann Hinrich Wichern, *Sämtliche Werke,* ed. Peter Meinhold (Berlin: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1962), 1: 188. On Wichern and the common priesthood, Hans-Martin Barth, *Einander Priester Sein. Allgemeines Priestertum in ökumenischer Perspecktive* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 79–102.

105. Henry E. Jacobs, *A Summary of the Christian Faith* (Philadelphia: General Council, 1907). A translation of Spener's 1677 *Das geistliche Priesterthum* appears on pp. 581–595 but without the supporting authorities. Jacobs was no radical, however, and he opposed a transference theory of ministerial office (424). See also his earlier defense of the Lutheran office of ministry based on Lutheran orthodox sources: Henry E. Jacobs, "The Doctrine of Ministry as Taught by the Dogmaticians of the Lutheran Church," *Quarterly Review of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* 4 (1874): 557–596.

106. Philipp Jacob Spener, *The Spiritual Priesthood,* trans. A. G. Voigt (Philadelphia: The Lutheran Publication Society, 1917). The second translation does not appear to be dependent on the earlier edition in Jacobs, of which Voigt appears unaware. That may signal that Jacobs's concern to revive a more robust understanding of the common priesthood was not especially well-known.

107. The debates in Germany tended to be more polarizing than among Lutherans in North America. On the left were rationalists known as the *Lichtfreunde,* many of whom rejected any ordained office on the basis of their understanding of the common priesthood. See, for instance, *Der protestantischen Freunde Wollen, Wirken und Glauben* (Dessau, 1847), 14; Jörn Brederlow, *"Lichtfreunde" und "Freie Gemeinden": Religiöser Protest und Freiheitsbewegung im Vormärz und in der Revolution von 1848/49* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1976). At the other end of the spectrum, a number of Lutheran theologians and jurists sought to restrict the common priesthood fundamentally, though often for very different reasons. See Notger Slenczka, "Die Diskussion um das kirchliche Amt in der lutherischen Theologie des 19. Jahrhunderts," in *In Christus berufen: Amt und allgemeines Priestertum in lutherischer Perspektive*, ed. Reinhard Rittner (Hannover: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 2001).

108. Walther often uses the phrase "das geistliche Priesterthum." Walther, *Stimme*, 354. Mayes suggests Walther may have been acquainted with the 1830 printing of Spener's *Das Geistliche Priesterthum*. Mayes, "Grabau versus Walther," 218.

109. Charles Briggs, *Church Unity: Studies of Its Most Important Problems* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1909), 431–432.

110. Briggs, *Theological Symbolics* (1914), 259–260.

111. Malcom Yarnell, "Changing Baptist Concepts of the Royal Priesthood: John Smyth and Edgar Young Mullins," in *The Rise of the Laity in Evangelical Protestantism*, ed. Deryck Lovegrove (New York: Routledge, 2002), 244. Mullins explicitly consulted Schaff on this point in his *Axioms of Religion: A New Interpretation of Baptist Faith* (Philadelphia: Griffin and Rowland, 1908), 106.

112. Timothy George, "The Priesthood of All Believers and the Quest for Theological Integrity," *Criswell Theological Review* 3.2 (1989): 283.

113. Walter Shurden refers to it as the "historic Baptist doctrine of the priesthood of believers." Walter Shurden, "The Priesthood of All Believers and Pastoral Authority in Baptist Thought," in *Proclaiming the Baptist Vision: The Priesthood of All Believers,* ed. Walter Shurden (Macon, Ga.: Smyth and Helwys, 1993), 131.

114. This was a prominent issue again in the debates around women's ministry and the Southern Baptist Convention in 2023. See "Should Southern Baptists Be Paying Attention to Rick Warren," https://www.sbcstand.com/blog/should-southern-baptists-be-paying-attention-to-rick-warren, accessed July 16, 2023.

115. Stephen Angell, "Early Friends' View of the Sacraments," *Quaker Religious Thought* 109 (2007): 12.

116. Modern Presbyterian editions of the Second Helvetic Confession insert, without notation, a header entitled "Priesthood of All Believers" that was not part of the original text. *The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, Part I: *Book of Confessions* (New York: Office of the General Assembly, 1983), 5:153. To be sure, the paragraph in question deals with 1 Peter 2:9 and Rev 1:6, but the addition also imposes a modern phraseology and connotations that would not have been used in the sixteenth century.

117. T. F. Torrance, *The Royal Priesthood* (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1955), 35.

118. See for instance, Hank Voss, *Priesthood of All Believers and Missio Dei* (Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick Press, 2016); Robert Muthiah, *The Priesthood of All Believers in the 21st Century* (Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick Press, 2009); and Uche Unizor and Hank Voss, *Representing Christ: A Vision for the Priesthood of All Believers* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press Academic, 2016).

119. O'Malley refers to it as a topic broached there. John W. O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2008), 186–187.