

# Working for things eternal : Engelbertus Lagerwey (1880-1959), Bishop of Deventer

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## Working for Things Eternal: Engelbertus Lagerwey (1880–1959), Bishop of Deventer

Wietse van der Velde

### Introduction

Despite the work of a few pioneers, the study of the history of the Old Catholic Church in the Netherlands in the twentieth century is still in its infancy.<sup>1</sup> This is particularly problematic when one considers, for example, that the Roman Catholic church historian Theo Clemens described this period in his biography of Archbishop Franciscus Kenninck as “absolutely worth the effort of further research”.<sup>2</sup> This article attempts to confirm Clemens’ assessment by considering the life and work of Engelbertus Lagerwey (1880–1959), priest and bishop in the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands, as a contribution to the discussion of the development of the identity of the Old Catholic Church in the Netherlands from the First World War through the Second World War and up to the time of Lagerwey’s death in 1959. This period was decisive in the transformation of the Roman Catholic Church of the Old Episcopal Clergy (*Cleresie*) – as the Dutch church was officially known – through contact with the *Altkatholische Bewegung* in Germany and Switzerland to the present day Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands.<sup>3</sup> Lagerwey had been born before the formation of the Union of Utrecht of Old Catholic Churches in 1889, an

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<sup>1</sup> See Angela Berlis, “Een bisschop met twee ringen. De gehuwde bisschop in de Oud-Katholieke Kerk”, in: Angela Berlis/Peter de Haan (eds), *Met passie en precisie. Vriendenbundel voor Jan Jacobs bij zijn afscheid als hoogleraar geschiedenis van kerk en theologie* (Nijmegen: Valkhofpers, 2010), 114–145; Theo H.J. Clemens, “Franciscus Kenninck (1859–1937): aartsbisschop tussen Oud-Bisschoppelijke Clerezie en Oud-Katholieke Kerk”, *Trajecta: Tijdschrift voor de geschiedenis van het katholiek leven in de Nederlanden* 10 (2001) 16–37; Fred Smit, “Andreas Rinkel (1889–1979)”, in: Wietse van der Velde et al. (eds), *Adjutorio Redemptoris. Dr Andreas Rinkel Aartsbisschop van Utrecht 1889–1979* (Amersfoort: Stichting Centraal Oud-Katholiek Boekhuis, 1987), 3–197. – With thanks to the Rev. Dr Michelle Boomgaard for the draft translation into English.

<sup>2</sup> Clemens, “Kenninck” (as note 1), 16.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. Clemens, “Kenninck” (as note 1); Berlis, “Bisschop” (as note 1).

institution which proved crucial for this development. By the time of his death, the development of the Union was largely a reality.<sup>4</sup>

Lagerwey is an ideal subject to illustrate these developments. He served the Church for nearly 55 years as a priest and a bishop, and his notable charisma made him widely influential. He engaged intensively with familiar aspects of church life and practice, such as church history, liturgy and liturgical art, as well as charting new, less familiar courses such as ecumenism, social and political engagement.<sup>5</sup> Through this, he embodied a new self-consciousness of what had by the end of this ministry clearly become “The Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands”, whose identity he helped to form and develop.

Lagerwey’s contribution to the Cleresie’s search for – and embodiment of – a new identity was focused in three areas. Firstly, his deep interest in the history of the Old Catholic Church, its liturgy and religious art, led him to concern himself with the care and exhibition of the buildings and artefacts of the Old Catholic Church, for example through his efforts for the restoration and the building of churches and the creation of an Old Catholic museum. Although these interests might be dismissed as “academic pursuits”, they reflected a missional foundation: by making Old Catholic heritage accessible, Lagerwey wanted to unlock it for his generation, but to do so in a manner that remained critical of the contemporary social context. Secondly, he was an unusually socially active cleric. This is evidenced by his chairmanship of the Old Catholic Support Fund (*Oud-Katholiek Ondersteuningsfonds*, in short OKOF); his choice of topic – the current state of world affairs – for his speech at the Willibrord Centenary in 1939; and by the risks he took during the Second World War both

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<sup>4</sup> On the theological developments of this period, see Peter-Ben Smit, *Old Catholic and Philippine Independent Ecclesiologies in History. The Catholic Church in Every Place* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 50–98. – On the formation of the Union of Utrecht, see the minutes of the foundational meeting in: Kurt Stalder (ed.), “Protokoll der Bischofskonferenz zu Utrecht in der erzbischöflichen Wohnung den 24. September 1889”, *IKZ* 79 (1989) 84–103.

<sup>5</sup> On the transition from the Roman Catholic Church of the Old Episcopal *Cleresie* to the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands, seen through the lens of Archbishop Kenninck, one generation before Lagerwey, see Clemens, “Kenninck” (as note 1). For more on the relevant developments of the 19th century, Dick J. Schoon, *Van bisschoppelijke Cleresie tot Oud-Katholieke Kerk, Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis van het katholicisme in Nederland gedurende de 19<sup>de</sup> eeuw* (Nijmegen: Valkhofpers, 2004). – Kenninck died in office as Archbishop of Utrecht in 1937; Lagerwey became Bishop of Deventer in 1941.

through his personal support of people called up for the *Arbeitseinsatz* and through his sheltering of those hiding from the Nazis. Finally, Lagerwey was involved in and supported the early ecumenical movement, as can be seen from his 1935 study of the state of the Dutch Old Catholic Church, his support for the inclusion of an ecumenical service during the Willibrord Centenary in 1939, and his involvement in ecumenical conversations during and after the Second World War. While the first of these was fairly typical for the Old Catholic tradition, the other two were more unusual. These aspects of Lagerwey's work left different legacies: whilst the Old Catholic Church held fast to the ecumenical "charism", it was less enthusiastic about the social engagement which he had embodied.<sup>6</sup>

This article will begin by offering a short biographical sketch of Lagerwey. A description of his activities in these three areas follows. It concludes with a consideration of his efforts in connection with the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands. The connections between the personal context of his work, its character and his ecclesial context are explored and his contribution to the development of the identity of the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands between 1918 and 1960 assessed.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> This can be seen, for instance, from the *Oud Katholieke Kerk van Nederland: Leer en Leven* handbooks from 1979 and 2000, which devote a great deal of attention to ecumenism and the liturgy but much less to the role of the Church in society. In contrast, the first edition of this handbook, published in 1951, which Lagerwey wrote, gives a clear impression of its role in the society. See: Engelbertus Lagerwey, *De Oud-Katholieke Kerk van Nederland. Haar leer en leven* (Amsterdam: Ruys, 1951); Peter J. Maan/Koenraad Ouwens/Fred Smit/Jan Visser, *De Oud-Katholieke Kerk van Nederland: Leer en Leven* (Hilversum: Gooi en Sticht, 1979); Angela Berlis/Koenraad Ouwens/Jan Visser/Wietse van der Velde/Jan-Lambert Wirix-Speetjens, *De Oud-Katholieke Kerk van Nederland: Leer en Leven* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2000).

<sup>7</sup> In addition to published works by and about Lagerwey, this article draws on Lagerwey's vast but until now unstudied professional and personal archive, which was embargoed until 2009. It includes correspondence, papers from commissions and boards, notes for lectures, and much else. It is a valuable and high-quality archive, of interest to both biographers of Lagerwey and historians of the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands. Lagerwey's professional and a portion of his personal archives can be found at Het Utrechts Archief, HUA 86A, no. 165–307. The remainder of his personal archive is found in the Archiefbewaarplaats of the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands in the Old Catholic Seminary Amersfoort [hereafter OCCNL Amersfoort], without reference numbers in the folder "persoonlijk privé-archief mgr. E. Lagerwey" [hereafter Lagerwey Papers].

## Early Life and Career (1880–1941)

Engelbertus Lagerwey was born in Amsterdam on 26 September 1880, the eldest son of Henricus Gregorius Lagerwey (1854–1930) and Alida Hendrika van Pel (1853–1929). His father was a carpenter-contractor and the family was part of the lower middle class. Four more sons would be born after Engelbertus. The family belonged to the Old Catholic parish of *H. H. Johannes en Willibrordus* (Sts. John and Willibrord) on the Brouwersgracht in Amsterdam. While his mother came from an old Old Catholic family in Egmond aan Zee, on his father's side, Engelbertus's grandfather had been the first Old Catholic.<sup>8</sup> Lagerwey attended elementary school in Amsterdam until 1894,<sup>9</sup> when he moved to Amersfoort, living in the Old Catholic Seminary and pursuing a classical diploma in the city gymnasium (grammar school) while also taking theological courses at the Seminary.<sup>10</sup> In 1903 he was accepted into Holy Orders, receiving lesser ordinations, culminating in ordination to subdeacon,<sup>11</sup> followed by his ordination to the diaconate by the Archbishop of Utrecht, Gerardus Gul, on 19 December of that year. He was ordained to the priesthood on 30 October 1905, and celebrated his first Mass at his home parish in the Brouwersgracht in Amsterdam on 6 November. He was immediately (the same day!) appointed to be

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<sup>8</sup> Lagerwey's grandfather was Johannes Nicolaas Alexander Lagerwey, "legitimate son of Johannes Lagerwey and Cornelia Krul, (part of the military garrison here) the father so-called reformed" who was baptized on 17 February 1817 in the Old Catholic Church in Delft. See Baptismal register of the Old Catholic parish of H. H. Maria Maior and Ursula Delft.

<sup>9</sup> OCCNL Amersfoort, Lagerwey Papers. See also: hV [= Henk J. W. Verhey], "Mgr. Lagerwey's levensloop. Een overvloed van activiteit", *De Oud-Katholiek* 75 (1959) 55–56.

<sup>10</sup> On the cooperation between this gymnasium and the Old Catholic Seminary, see Fred Smit, "Van Leuven naar Amersfoort", in: Fred Smit/Jan Visser/Antonius Jan Glazemaker, *250 jaar Oud-Katholiek Seminarie* (Amersfoort: Oud-Katholiek Boekhuis, 1975), 3–13, 9–10. On the history of this seminary, in addition to Smit/Visser/Glazemaker, op. cit., see also Angela Berlis/Jan Hallebeek "Das Seminar der niederländischen Kirche", in: Günther Esser/Matthias Ring (eds), *Zwischen Freiheit und Gebundenheit; Festschrift zum 100jährigen Bestehen des Alt-Katholischen Seminars der Universität Bonn (1902–2002)* (Bonn: Alt-Katholischer Bistumsverlag, 2002), 238–260.

<sup>11</sup> The Old Catholic Church at this time held fast to the seven-step process for ordination to the priesthood, including first the ordination to the "lesser orders" of doorkeeper, reader, exorcist, and acolyte before one became a subdeacon, then deacon, and eventually a priest.

*pastoor* (rector) of the small parish of H. Maria Magdalena in Zaandam and its *schuilkerk* (hidden church), which in 1899 had had 53 members and by 1909 would have only 42. After five years in Zaandam, Lagerwey was asked to be *pastoor* in Dordrecht, a slightly larger parish, with 95 members in 1910, where he remained until 1924. Since 1840, the parish had been worshipping in a neoclassical building in which the church is placed beyond a small garden, open to the street, but partly concealed by the rectory. In Dordrecht, as in Zaandam, Lagerwey's ministry encompassed not only pastoral but also historical, art historical, theological, missionary, and church leadership questions.<sup>12</sup>

His rectorship in Dordrecht was followed by an appointment as pastor of the cathedral parish of St Gertrude in Utrecht. This appointment coincided with his nomination to the Metropolitan Chapter: he was elected on 24 March 1924, and installed on 30 September. Simultaneously, he was also made archpriest of the city of Utrecht and its environs and treasurer of the Chapter, and thus also bursar of the seminary.<sup>13</sup> Lagerwey moved to Utrecht, a city with which he would retain close ties until his death, and where he made his career. In 1923, Lagerwey's new parish counted 459 members. By 1931, records suggest that 51% of the members aged over 16 were receiving communion at least once per year, and that on an average Sunday, about 25% of the members attended church, although this rose to 46% on Easter. In 1931, membership of the three Old Catholic parishes that served the city of Utrecht totaled combined 1326 Old Catholics, approximately 0.8% of the population.

Not much is known about Lagerwey's pastoral work.<sup>14</sup> Lagerwey's not uncritical opinion of his parish can be seen from his 1932 booklet, "His-

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<sup>12</sup> This includes a decision in 1915 to create a facility in Breda where services would be held every other month. See Jacob Spaans, *H. Maria Maior Maior. De historie van een Dordts kerkgebouw en zijn orgel* (Sliedrecht: Merweboek, 2009), 32. Another example of Lagerwey's missionary activities during this time, in this case in the area of internal ministry, was his involvement in the reorganization of the *Oud-Katholieke Jeugdbond* (Old Catholic Youth Organization) in 1912; he was many years the president of the governing board of this organization. See also: *De Oud-Katholiek* 75 (1959) 55.

<sup>13</sup> OCCNL Amersfoort, Lagerwey Papers.

<sup>14</sup> In 1941, an anonymous author in *De Oud Katholiek* commented of this area of his work: "What the pastor [Lagerwey] does as catechist, in the care of souls, as advisor and consoler, reflects his personal understanding as servant of Christ, and here-in he is answerable solely to God and his bishop", *De Oud-Katholiek* 57 (1941) 266–267: 266.

tory of the parish of St. Gertrudis, Utrecht”, in which he for instance comments on the consequences of the low birthrate for the congregation. Lagerwey himself would, however, remain unmarried.<sup>15</sup> Another concern, however, was lack of engagement: “the community of St Gertrudis does not seem to bear witness that her members burn with zeal for the Lord’s affairs and His Church.”<sup>16</sup> Lagerwey made efforts to support the development of such zealous faith, not least through his efforts to increase the parish’s self-awareness of its heritage and its spiritual foundation. Celebrations of (Dutch) saints, the completion of the cathedral church, which was first used in 1914, and the construction of an Old Catholic museum all played an important role in this, as described below.

### **Bishop of Deventer (1941–1959)**

Johannes Hermanus Berends, who had become Bishop of Deventer in 1929, died on 24 July 1941.<sup>17</sup> On 2 October, the Archbishop of Utrecht, Andreas Rinkel, nominated Lagerwey as Berends’ successor.<sup>18</sup> The diocese of Deventer had no Old Catholic parishes; rather, since 1758, bishops of Deventer had been appointed to secure the apostolic succession in the Church of the *Cleresie* by ensuring that there was always a bishop who could consecrate another bishop. The bishops of Deventer remained parish priests in the diocese of Utrecht, but shared in the work of the episco-

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<sup>15</sup> The reason for this is not known. Initially, Lagerwey, like all Old Catholic priests, would have been expected to be celibate: mandatory celibacy for priests in the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands was not lifted until 1922, by which time Lagerwey was 42. Thereafter, it was presumably his choice not to marry. Berlis, “Bischop” (as note 1).

<sup>16</sup> Engelbertus Lagerwey, *Geschiedenis der Gemeente van de heilige Gertrudis te Utrecht* (Utrecht: De Ploeg, 1932), 64.

<sup>17</sup> *De Oud-Katholiek* 57 (1941) 234–235.

<sup>18</sup> *De Oud-Katholiek* 57 (1941) 266–267. For a report of the ordination and Rinkel’s sermon, see *ibid.*, 283; more information in *ibid.*, 290. For Lagerwey’s coat of arms (it included the eagle of Deventer, which carries a heavy hammer in its claws), device and seal, see *ibid.*, 307. On the role of the See of Deventer, see: Jan Hallebeek, *Canoniek recht in Ecclesiologische Context. Een inleiding tot het Kerkelijk Recht van de Oud-Katholieke Kerk van Nederland* (Sliedrecht/Amersfoort: Oud-Katholiek Boekhuis/Merweboek, 2011), 175–176. See also Guus Bary, “Excentriek in het bisdommenlandschap. Deventer als bisschopsstad in de rooms-katholieke en oud-katholieke traditie”, in: Guus Bary et al. (eds), *Lebuïnus en Walburgis bijeen. Deventer en Zutphen als historische centra van kerkelijk leven* (Delft: Eburon, 2006) 13–33.

pate of the Metropolitan Province of Utrecht. The appointment of Lagerwey was a risky move for Rinkel, who was a very reserved person, but who chose the much more outgoing Lagerwey – who was not averse to taking calculated risks – as his closest colleague. Rinkel’s submission to the *Biografische Woordenboek* revealed the extent to which they complemented each other.<sup>19</sup> On Wednesday, 12 November 1941 – the Feast Day of St Lebuïnus, the patron saint of the former cathedral of Deventer –, the new bishop was installed.

Contemporary events affected the celebration, as reporters noted: the procession was “not as great as that of other episcopal ordinations, due to the absence of many foreign bishops”, but “nonetheless made an imposing impression”.<sup>20</sup> Aside from Rinkel and the Bishop of Haarlem, Henricus van Vlijmen, only the German Bishop Erwin Kreuzer was present as co-consecrator. Among those in attendance were the mayor and the provincial governor Utrecht, the head of the Ecumenical Council and of the Lausanne Committee (Faith and Order), and the dean of the university. Rinkel preached on “guarding what has been entrusted to you” (1 Timothy 6:20), and this was certainly what the new bishop planned to do.<sup>21</sup> For his

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<sup>19</sup> Andreas Rinkel, “Lagerwey, Engelbertus (1880–1959)”, in: *Biografisch Woordenboek van Nederland I* (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1979), 328–329. To his (even more introverted) colleague Urs Kury, Bishop of the Old Catholic Church of Switzerland, Rinkel wrote: “It is remarkable that ‘official things’, representation always feels a hard work to us. That is at least the case with me, one should be like Bishop Lagerwey, who likes to do this and who feels himself as a fish in the water.” (“Es ist merkwürdig, dass das ‘Offizielle’, die Repräsentation, uns immer schwer fällt. Wenigstens mir; da soll man eigentlich sein wie Bischof Lagerwey, der dies gerade gerne macht und sich immer fühlt wie ein Fisch im Wasser.”). Andreas Rinkel to Urs Kury, 27 October 1955, OCCNL Amersfoort, K 14.

<sup>20</sup> Report in *De Oud-Katholiek* 57 (1941) 283.

<sup>21</sup> For example, eight days after Lagerwey’s ordination as bishop, when Rinkel consecrated the new Saint Willibrord Church in Arnhem, the new Bishop of Deventer assisted. He read aloud the declaration regarding the relics that had been placed in the altar. Lagerwey had donated the relics of Willibrord, Bonifatius, Lebuïnus and Werenfried, which had until then been in St Gertrudis, all saints with strong local and national connections. At the end of the service, the children of the parish sang a song, written by Lagerwey, entitled *Wij, kinderen van Willibrord* (“We, the children of Willibrord”). *De Oud-Katholiek* 57 (1941) 290–291. The text of this song also gives an indication of Lagerwey’s spirituality: he was convinced that the Old Catholic Church was the direct heir of the church founded by St Willibrord, and that it should follow Willibrord in proclaiming the gospel of Christ without later (Roman Catholic) additions or (Protestant) omissions. On Lagerwey’s great interest in the rich trove of



motto, he chose “Eternitati laboramus” (“We work for the things eternal”<sup>22</sup>), casting himself as a “worker”, perhaps in contrast to the more scholarly metropolitan Rinkel. Rinkel and Lagerwey were bound through friendship, and from this point on were in almost daily contact. They were opposites in both appearance and character: Lagerwey was tall, Rinkel short; Lagerwey gregarious while Rinkel was shy. Lagerwey was at home in many areas, and if he felt a stranger, he soon assessed the lie of the land and acted accordingly.<sup>23</sup> He enjoyed being a bishop and had a flair for the role.

Lagerwey was nominated to the See of Deventer in the midst of the Second World War. He continued his political and socially conscious attitudes even after his nomination. This was evidenced by various protests logged with the collaborating government, liturgical revisions, and decisive action on behalf of those hiding from the Nazis (see below). The involvement of his brother Jan in the NSB, the Dutch Nazi party, must have caused him considerable pain.<sup>24</sup>

On 1 August 1945, Lagerwey, by now nearly 65 years old, laid down his positions as *pastoor* of St Gertrudis and archpriest of Utrecht to take up a new post as the first secretary of the Ecumenical Council of the Netherlands from 1946.<sup>25</sup> In 1950, now 70 years old, Lagerwey resigned his office in the Metropolitan Chapter. The Chapter expressed its appreciation by naming him an honorary Canon, a title which had never been conferred before. That same year, the City of Utrecht awarded him the city’s silver medal, presenting it to him in a ceremony which took place in “his” museum, during which he was also appointed as an officer in the order of Oranje-Nassau.

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relics of the Metropolitan Chapter of Utrecht and the parish of St Gertrudis, see Anique de Kruijf, *Miraculeus bewaard, Middeleeuwse Utrechtse relieken op reis: de schat van de oud-katholieke Gertrudiskathedraal* (Zutphen: Walburgpers, 2010), 11–13, 164–165.

<sup>22</sup> *De Oud-Katholiek* 57 (1941) 307. The initial letters E and L of this motto also stood for Engelbertus Lagerwey.

<sup>23</sup> Jacobus N. van Ditmarsch, *90 jaar Kathedrale Kerk van Ste. Gertrudis. Een terugblik mét perspectief* (s.l.: s.n., 2004), 18.

<sup>24</sup> HUA 86A, 289. Jan died in January 1946 in the internment camp for NSB members in Schoorl.

<sup>25</sup> See, for instance, the report of the first meeting in the *Utrechts Nieuwsblad*, 7 May, 1946, 1.

Lagerwey remained Bishop of Deventer, however, and continued to play a prominent public role. In 1956, when Queen Juliana visited the Museum of Utrecht to view the exhibition *Uit Koninklijk Bezit* (From Royal Possession), the Bishop of Deventer served as her guide.<sup>26</sup> In 1954, on the golden jubilee of Lagerwey's ordination, the queen sent her personal secretary, Mrs. N. Smit-Avis, to represent her at the service.<sup>27</sup> However, Lagerwey's health had begun to decline, and from 1959 he was admitted to the hospital several times. During his final illness, Archbishop Rinkel visited him daily, and Rinkel was present at Lagerwey's death on 13 March.<sup>28</sup> After a solemn funeral mass on 18 March, Lagerwey was laid to rest in the episcopal crypt in the rotunda of the Soestbergen cemetery on the Gansstraat in Utrecht.<sup>29</sup>

### Working for Eternity in an Agitated Church and World

Lagerwey was a notable personality both within his Church and beyond. The analysis that follows will focus on three aspects of his efforts and performance: his dealings with Old Catholic heritage (in the sense of its history, artefacts and liturgy), his social and political positioning, and his place within the ecumenical movement, all of which contributed to the development of the identity of the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands during Lagerwey's life and ministry.

First, it is important to note some of the characteristics of the church and society of the time. Lagerwey lived during a time when the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands was reorienting itself, increasingly incorporating the ideas and organizational structures that were found in the Old Catholic Churches in Germany and Switzerland. These included liturgies in the vernacular (the vesperale in 1909, the missal in 1910), the introduction of a synod (1919), the ending of mandatory celibacy for priests (1922),

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<sup>26</sup> E. g., the coverage and photo in *Utrechts Nieuwsblad*, 12 May 1956, 1 and 17, which includes the speech Lagerwey gave at this event.

<sup>27</sup> HUA, 86A, 279. Some people have suggested that Lagerwey sometimes acted as spiritual adviser to Queen Juliana. However, nothing so far found in the archive indicates any closer relationship to the royal family.

<sup>28</sup> In the reports of his death – which was front page news in Utrecht – his ecumenical efforts were particularly lauded. *Utrechts Nieuwsblad*, 14 March 1959, 1.

<sup>29</sup> *Utrechts Nieuwsblad*, 18 March 1959, 2.

and from the early 1920s, increasing involvement in theological dialogue with the Orthodox and the Anglicans.<sup>30</sup>

Lagerwey's ministry spanned the two world wars and the interwar period. This was a period of considerable transition which witnessed significant social, political and ecclesial change,<sup>31</sup> including the start of the decline in church membership, as witnessed in the censuses of 1920 and 1930.<sup>32</sup> The First World War with its social, political, and moral effects was followed by the Great Depression (ca. 1929–32) and the resulting problems, including massive unemployment and the rising of communism and fascism, as well as the ecumenical movement. All of this also had an impact on the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands, as described in an internal study “of the progress or backsliding of the communities of the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands” undertaken in 1934, commissioned by the Old Catholic Support Fund (OKOF), which was very active in building up the faith at this time, with the knowledge of the bishops. Lagerwey convened this commission, and therefore had detailed knowledge of its work, and generally supported the direction it took, as can be seen from his summary of its work (see below).<sup>33</sup> The guiding question of the study was, “What do you think of the Christ?” Statistical evidence was assessed, including census data; questionnaires sent to pastors, church councils and organizations, and several individuals responded to a call in the Old Catholic magazine to assist in the analysis of the Church's plight. All this evidence underpinned the study's conclusion that the Church had not escaped the “unchurched and secular nature of the current age”.<sup>34</sup>

Though the statistics could not measure the vitality of Old Catholic communities' faith, they did give some indication of the situation. These were not often encouraging about the state of the parishes, nor were they

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<sup>30</sup> For more on this period of transition, see, e. g., Berlis, “Bisschop” (as note 1) and Clemens, “Kenninck” (as note 1). For more on the relationship with the Anglicans and the Orthodox, see Smit, *Ecclesiologies* (as note 4), 209–226.

<sup>31</sup> For this period, see for instance: Joris van Eijnatten/Fred van Lieburg, *Nederlandse Religiegeschiedenis* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2nd edn, 2006), 303–327.

<sup>32</sup> Otto de Jong, *Nederlandse Kerkgeschiedenis* (Nijkerk: Callenbach, 1985), 386–387. See also the statistical data in: Hans Knippenberg, *De religieuze kaart van Nederland. Omvang en geografische spreiding van de godsdienstige gezindten vanaf de Reformatie tot heden* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1992).

<sup>33</sup> *Studie van de commissie tot onderzoek naar den voor- of achteruitgang van de gemeenten der Oud Katholieke Kerk in Nederland* (s.l.: s. n., [1934]), 3.

<sup>34</sup> *Studie* (as note 33), 3–4.

optimistic about the support for pastors by church boards. Statistics relating to areas such as church administration, catechesis, pastoral care also did not give cause for optimism, but revealed an absence of true cooperation “in the parish”. Respondents saw the neglect of pastoral home visits as particularly problematic. The statistics showed that in some parishes, and especially in the larger cities, there had been a notable decline in the attendance at worship services and sacraments. Also of concern was the decline in family size, “a phenomenon affecting the entire population”. The effects of this decline, moreover, were not being sufficiently mitigated through “converts”. The loss of the faithful to other denominations or to atheism was also dealt with in the report, which noted the possibility that “lost members had become lost souls”. The report further observed the “lack of value given to that which we have received as Old Catholics through God’s grace”.<sup>35</sup> The underlying assumption of the committee was that no redemption was possible without Christ and that Christ could not be worshiped more purely in the Netherlands than in the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands, which was understood to be the descendent and only representative of the original, “old” Catholic Church. However, the commission noted a general “lack of love for the Church as the body of humanity saved by Christ”.<sup>36</sup> The religious education of the faithful should focus on this goal. Unfortunately, however, the report concluded that the formation of future pastors was characterized by “too much intellectualism and too little religious sentiment”. It recommended an annual “retreat” for clergy. It also requested clarity and uniformity on the question in which pastoral or ethical cases communion should be withheld from members of the church. Finally, it asserted that ecumenism was fine in principle, but “the Commission believes it desirable to be consistent.” The report concluded with thirteen recommendations. Besides a number of practical proposals, including more frequent home visits by clergy, these include the wish for stronger episcopal oversight; for agreement on fundamental principles in the face of ecumenical efforts; and for statements by church officials to guide attitudes to particular political parties and unions, and to other religious communities.

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<sup>35</sup> *Studie* (as note 33), 12–13.

<sup>36</sup> *Studie* (as note 33), 18.

## Passing on Heritage: Lagerwey's Efforts for the Old Catholic Tradition

The first characteristic interest of Lagerwey's is the Old Catholic tradition, especially in regards to art, and its related history and liturgy. According to Rinkel, these interests had defined him since he was a schoolboy.<sup>37</sup> These interests land him square in the often (church) historical tradition of theological practice within the *Cleresie* of the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands. Lagerwey's own church-historical interests fell more under the rubric of rediscovering sources on the one hand, and passing them on.

For example, during his pastoral ministry in Dordrecht, he supported the 1919 purchase of a new organ, an instrument to be used for worship services. In the same parish, he also furthered the purchase of (antique) paraments and church silver.<sup>38</sup> He used both in characteristic fashion: he organized (educational) displays and shows, such as for the occasion of the first five-year anniversary and gathering of the women's union.<sup>39</sup> The goal of the presentation was to raise awareness of Old Catholic history and to reveal the liturgy and its meaning.

That year, Lagerwey also became a member of *Cor Unum et Anima Una*, an association for priests who wanted to bring a new spirit into the church.<sup>40</sup> This organization moved in circles similar to Lagerwey's artistic and historical interests. The organization worked to preserve the heritage of the *Cleresie*, for instance by preserving a valuable collection of religious and ecclesial engravings and prints. Lagerwey also became a conservator of this collection.<sup>41</sup> They also created and distributed the magazine *De Oud Katholiek*. This was the de facto newspaper of the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands.<sup>42</sup> The programmatic title of it shows that the organization also identified with 19th century thought which would be of great interest for the development of what is now the identity of the Old

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<sup>37</sup> Rinkel, "Lagerwey" (as note 19), 328.

<sup>38</sup> Spaans, *Maria Maior* (as note 12), 72–73. However, the purchase of the organ fell through due to the financial situation of the parish after the First World War.

<sup>39</sup> Spaans, *Maria Maior* (as note 12), 34.

<sup>40</sup> For the background to this organization see Schoon, *Cleresie* (as note 5), 640–644.

<sup>41</sup> The collection is currently housed in Museum Catherijneconvent, Utrecht.

<sup>42</sup> The journal, which was published by *Cor unum et Anima Una* from 1885 until 1924, was independent, but closely linked to the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands. Schoon, *Cleresie* (as note 5), 644.

Catholic Church of the Netherlands. At the same time, the newsletter emphasizes a further aim of the organization, namely informing and communicating church news and theological insights with the intent of building up the Church. Lagerwey regularly wrote for *De Oud Katholiek*. Moreover, and entirely in keeping with his interests, efforts and increasing competence, in 1920 Lagerwey was appointed secretary to the committee overseeing preparations for the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the election of Cornelis Steenoven as Archbishop of Utrecht (1723). This celebration also involved recovering sources, from both the heritage of the *Cleresie* and the wider, more recent, Old Catholic community, with the intention of deepening faith, as can be seen, from the *Festschrift* prepared for the event.<sup>43</sup> This appeal to insights into German-speaking Old Catholicism with its strong emphasis on synodality can also be seen in Lagerwey's later efforts in the area of ecclesial governance,<sup>44</sup> in particular his contribution to the drafting of the regulations for the first Dutch Synod which met in 1920.<sup>45</sup>

Lagerwey's focus on the dual tradition of the *Cleresie* and Old Catholicism – characterized by the rediscovery of sources and passing on of the insights gained through this process – are also in evidence in a remarkable source from his private archive, a 180-page handwritten folio in which he collected theological inspirations and literature. This includes quotations from the church fathers such as Augustine, notes about Port-Royal,<sup>46</sup> and long extracts from articles by German and Swiss Old Catholic theologians such as Joseph Langen and Eduard Herzog. The collection also reveals Lagerwey's previously unremarked interest in Biblical scholarship, with a

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<sup>43</sup> See Johannes Berends et al. (eds), *Gedenkboek. 1723 – 27 april – 1923. Tweede eeuwfeest der verkiezing van Cornelis Steenoven tot Aartsbisschop van Utrecht* (Utrecht: s. n., 1923).

<sup>44</sup> On the emphasis on synodal governance within the German-speaking Old Catholic Churches and the *Cleresie*, see Jan Hallebeek, "The Old Catholic Synods. Traditional or Innovative Elements within the Constitution of the Church?", *IKZ* 101 (2011) 65–100.

<sup>45</sup> hV, "Levensloop" (as note 9), 55. On the synodal council, see Hallebeek, *Recht* (as note 18), 93–96, 189.

<sup>46</sup> This interest is also documented in a collection of texts which Lagerwey initially gathered for use during the weekly masses at St Gertrudis, which were published in 1929 in the booklet *Stemmen uit Port-Royal. Woorden van troost en verlichting* (Rotterdam: Boekhandel "Plan C", 1929). This publication also illustrates Lagerwey's own "Jansenist" leanings.

focus on (particularly German) historical-critical research into the Old Testament. He wrote a detailed summary of a book by the Dutch protestant theologian Johannes J. van Oosterzee (1817–1882) on the hidden life of Jesus.<sup>47</sup> The collection also includes notes on “typical Old Catholic questions” such as the nature of primateship of the Church, the use of the vernacular in the liturgy, and the frequency of communion. Lagerwey’s collection touched on the indifference of many people towards worship and his concern that many people seemed simply to be going through the motions. Loose pages in neat handwriting demonstrate his preoccupation with the question “What is Catholic?” His answer recalls the familiar declaration by Vincent of Lérins: that which has been believed everywhere, always, by all. The text, dated 20 December 1913, was presumably used at a gathering of the OKOF. This organization with a strong lay participation was very active in building up the faith and church life at this time. The manuscript of the collection resonates with the theological questions which would remain with him for the rest of his life.

These patterns continued during his pastoral ministry in Utrecht (1924–1945). The attention Lagerwey gave to the two church buildings entrusted to him as pastor exemplify his concern to build up tradition. In 1924, he began services in the Cathedral of St Gertrudis, which was clearly meant to serve as the flagship for a Church which was regaining its self-awareness after the difficulties of the 19th century.<sup>48</sup> He also took responsibility for the Gertrudis Chapel, the old *schuilkerk* hidden in the house attached to the Cathedral. At this stage, the Cathedral had not yet been completed; in particular, the ambitious internal decorations remained unfinished due to the poor state of finances during and after the First World War, combined with unexpected construction expenses. The future of the chapel was also unclear. Lagerwey oversaw the completion of the interior decoration and furnishing of the cathedral so that in 1932 he could without exaggeration describe himself as having been “allowed to com-

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<sup>47</sup> See Johannes J. van Oosterzee, *Het leven van Jezus I* (Utrecht: Kemink en Zoon, 1846). Lagerwey’s clear interest in Biblical scholarship could be related to the fact that in 1911 he became a member of the commission for the translation of the Bible, to which he also served as secretary. This commission’s efforts resulted in the publication of a new Old Catholic translation of the New Testament into Dutch in 1953.

<sup>48</sup> On this topic, see Schoon, *Cleresie* (as note 5).

plete the church”.<sup>49</sup> He made similar efforts to collect funds for the restoration of the *schuilkerk* and rectory of his first parish in Zaandam, chairing the fund-raising committee during 1927/28. Alongside the completion of the Cathedral of St Gertrudis, a project that helped to spread a conscious spirit of Old Catholicism far and wide, Lagerwey also worked on the conversion of the Chapel of St Gertrudis, an embodiment of the *Cleresie* of the past, to found “his” museum.<sup>50</sup>

When Lagerwey became the pastor of the cathedral parish, the chapel already contained a more or less permanent exhibition of *objets d’art*, paintings and prints illustrating the history of the Old Catholic Church, Port-Royal and its sister churches. This had been created by his predecessor, Cornelis Deelder (1853–1928), and was his private domain:<sup>51</sup> Deelder alone determined when it would be open for viewing. In 1925 Lagerwey made a plea for an illustrated catalog of these artefacts, and the creation of a museum.<sup>52</sup> His motion was seconded by the rector of Schiedam, and Lagerwey set to work, convincing the church board to let the *schuilkerk* as a museum for a guilder per year for fifty years, and gaining approval for several loans.<sup>53</sup> The Association for the Old Catholic Museum of Religious Art and History was founded on 6 January 1926. It was opened on 1 August 1928 by the mayor of Utrecht, Joachim Fockema Andrea, and Lager-

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<sup>49</sup> Lagerwey, *Gertrudis* (as note 17), 49, as well as the completion of the interior, described in this book, Lagerwey also created a meeting room, the current chapter room, in the rectory. Above the main entrance of the church a mosaic of Christ as Prince of Peace was installed, and over the side doors mosaics of Willibrord and Gertrudis. During his time as rector, church furnishings were for specific occasions also added by sculptor Willem van den Berg, a member of the parish and friend of the rector (later rector-bishop). Lagerwey also donated the Paschal candle-stand which depicts the head of Jonah (whose face also resembles that of the donor, whose coat-of-arms is depicted on the shaft). Lagerwey also commissioned a pontifical pitcher and lavabo bowl which are still in use today. To mark the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood in 1954, Lagerwey was presented with a clock, which was consecrated as the Willibrordus clock during a celebration of vespers.

<sup>50</sup> As Lagerwey notes, *Gertrudis* (as note 16), 22, the church is in the style of the Church of Maria Maior (the great Church of St Mary), the collegiate church from the Middle Ages on whose grounds the *Ste. Gertrudiskathedraal* was build, so even the new building harks back to the medieval Church of Utrecht.

<sup>51</sup> For the following see particularly Berend W. Verhey, *1926 Oud-Katholiek Museum 1986* (private publication).

<sup>52</sup> Verhey, *Museum* (as note 51), 17–18.

<sup>53</sup> Verhey, *Museum* (as note 51), 60–67.



wey was appointed director.<sup>54</sup> He retained oversight even during his episcopate, when he formally resigned from other such responsibilities.<sup>55</sup> The exhibitions organized under Lagerwey's aegis emphasized the history of the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands, that is the *Cleresie*, with occasional attention to other themes.<sup>56</sup> His expertise in church history and art was also valued outside Old Catholic circles, as evidenced by a number of memberships in outside organizations.<sup>57</sup>

Lagerwey incorporated much of his study and vision into his most well-known book: *De Oud-Katholieke Kerk van Nederland. Haar Leer en Leven* (The Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands: Its Life and Teaching).<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Verhey, *Museum* (as note 51), 43. Lagerwey was not on the board, but he became acting director of the museum.

<sup>55</sup> The new director, *pastoor* Cornelis F. Nieuwenhuyzen, who lived in Haarlem, was only prepared to assume the office if the actual responsibilities remained in Lagerwey's hands.

<sup>56</sup> A list of exhibitions will give an indication of which aspects of art history the founders – always primarily Lagerwey – wanted to highlight: the 1500th anniversary of the death of St Augustine (1930); two exhibitions on the history of the Vicariate and the Metropolitan Chapter of Utrecht (1931 and 1933); the 50th anniversary of the OKOF in 1937, for which Lagerwey made considerable efforts to complete a special retrospective film, “50 jaar O. K. O. F.”, intended to give a broad perspective of the life of the church; Archbishop Petrus Codde (1952); the Abbey of Port-Royal-des-Champs and the poet-playwright Jean Racine (1949); the last great exhibition – the heartfelt wish of Lagerwey – was in 1957 when the Old Catholic Church's collection of spectacular vestments dating from the late Middle Ages was shown. During this period, Lagerwey also published a few articles outside Old Catholic circles, such as “De albe van St. Bernulfus”, *Oud-Utrecht* 8 (1933) 82 and “De hamer van Sint Maarten”, *Oud-Utrecht* 9 (1934) 89.

<sup>57</sup> At the great festival at Echternach to commemorate the thirteenth centenary of the birth of St Willibrord (1958) Lagerwey had, along with Archbishop Andreas Rinkel, a seat in the honorary committee. From 1931, he had been made a working member of the Historical Association (*Historisch Genootschap*). In the same manner, he was named a member of the *Provinciaal Utrechtsch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen* (Academy of Arts and Sciences of the Province of Utrecht) in 1938, and in 1940, he received a seat in the city's Commission on Monuments. Documentation in: OCCNL Amersfoort, Lagerwey Papers.

<sup>58</sup> Lagerwey, *Kerk* (as note 6). See also the earlier edition: *De Oudkatholieke [sic] kerk in Nederland* (Den Haag: Trio, 1951). In 1935 he had already published an article on the Dutch Old Catholic Church: “Die Niederländische Altkatholische Kirche”, in: Friedrich Siegmund-Schultze (ed.), *Ekklesia: Eine Sammlung von Selbstdarstellungen der christlichen Kirchen, Band III: Die Mitteleuropäischen Länder. Die Altkatholische Kirche* (Gotha: Leopold Klotz, 1935), 54–64.

Here he also traced his familiar path with an emphasis on the local church, “the church of the Fatherland”. In his formulation, the emphasis on the rights of the local church, prominent in the 17th and 18th centuries, and the hallmarks of the *Cleresie*, mingled with 19th-century insights regarding the importance of nationality (and sovereignty) which had typified the (liberal) Old Catholicism which emerged in that century, and which were also incorporated within the *Cleresie*.<sup>59</sup> On this basis, Lagerwey turned against the “Roman” interpretations of church history of the 16th, 17th and 18th century put forward by the Roman-Catholic church historian Lodewijk J. Rogier (1894–1974), who was highly influential at the time.<sup>60</sup> Lagerwey’s indictment of Rome is severe: the Pope sees himself as “the head of the Church of Christ and every member of the Church of Christ [as] his lowly servant”.<sup>61</sup> Considering the veneration of saints, he declares that Rome’s claims to hold the exclusive right to canonize and the doctrine of the superabundant merits of the saints are “Roman” teachings, “and not those of the Catholic church”.<sup>62</sup> His focus is rather on the veneration of patron saints and of national saints, an example of his emphasis on the autonomy of the local church.<sup>63</sup> His formulation here echoes that of the Bonn Union Conferences, key texts for 19th-century Old Catholicism.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Schoon, *Cleresie* (as note 5).

<sup>60</sup> Lagerwey, *Kerk* (as note 6), 16 and 18, referring to Lodewijk J. Rogier, *Geschiedenis van het Katholicisme in Noord-Nederland in de 16e en 17e eeuw* (Amsterdam: Urbi et orbi, 1945).

<sup>61</sup> Lagerwey, *Kerk* (as note 6), 25. At the same time, he calls Pius IX a great man, who, “had he used his gifts in other ways, (...) would have better served his global church, in our estimation”. *Ibid.*, 32. On the relationship with the Roman Catholic church, see also the pastoral letter of 1953 issued by Lagerwey and his episcopal colleagues: Andreas Rinkel/Jacobus van der Oord/Engelbertus Lagerwey, *Herderlijke brief voor het jaar 1953 naar aanleiding van de invoering der Roomse Hiërarchie in het jaar 1853* (Utrecht: Oud-Katholieke Kerk, 1953).

<sup>62</sup> Lagerwey, *Kerk* (as note 6), 65.

<sup>63</sup> See also Engelbertus Lagerwey, “Selbständigkeit einer Kirche”, *IKZ* 36 (1946) 1–7.

<sup>64</sup> See Heinrich Reusch, *Bericht über die 1874 und 1875 zu Bonn gehaltenen Unions-Conferenzen*. Neudruck der Ausgabe in zwei Bänden von 1874 und 1875 (Bonn: Alt-Katholischer Bistumsverlag, 2002). See also: Günter Esser, “Der Einheit verpflichtet. Eine Einführung zu den Berichten über die ‘Bonner Unionskonferenzen’ von 1874/75”, in: *ibid.*, V–XXIV.

Lagerwey worked hard for the inclusion of more of these “patriotic” saints in the liturgical calendar.<sup>65</sup>

All this shows the importance of Lagerwey’s engagement with the twin traditions of *Cleresie* and Old Catholicism, both of which he cherished and furthered.

### **A Socially Conscious and Politically Aware Religion**

A second hallmark of Lagerwey’s life and work was his social consciousness and political awareness. His social and political engagement often took place in the context of his ecumenical efforts, for example in movements and associations which might be considered a part of the Life and Work movement.

The first clear manifestations of Lagerwey’s social awareness came into focus during his time as a rector in Dordrecht. There he became chairman of the *Armenraad* (the Council on Poverty) and later he and the lawyer L. W. A. Colombijn founded the Old Catholic Insurance Association.<sup>66</sup> Later examples include his involvement with the Union of Young Old Catholics and their “Work Camps for Unemployed Young Old Catholics” in 1934–35.<sup>67</sup> 1935 also saw the creation of the Old Catholic Federation of Trades Unions.<sup>68</sup> The “spiritual advisor” and creator of this Federation, Professor Bastiaan Abraham van Kleef (1889–1965), was strongly sup-

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<sup>65</sup> Archbishop Rinkel visited the USA from July to October 1954, in order (among other engagements) to participate in the second Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Evanston. Due to the length of his absence, he appointed Lagerwey *vicaris sede impedita*. While exercising this office, Lagerwey installed the commission which was tasked with the creation of a new missal. The commission received several instructions, including that “[m]ore saints of local origin should be placed in the *calendarium*” (OCCNL Amersfoort, Notulen van de Commissie voor de liturgie). The first draft of the section of the revised missal listing the “national” saints – including translations of medieval and eighteenth-century prayers – was prepared by Lagerwey. The saints were all medieval figures. See E. Lagerwey to C. Tol, March 1954, OCCNL Amersfoort, Notulen van de Commissie voor de liturgie). When the missal was published in 1960, they were almost all included. See *Misboek van de Oud-Katholieke Kerk van Nederland* (Amsterdam: J. H. de Bussy, 1960).

<sup>66</sup> hV, “Levensloop” (as note 9), 55.

<sup>67</sup> See *Bondsleven. Orgaan van den Bond van Vereenigingen van jonge Oud-Katholieken in Nederland* 10 (1935) 31–32; 11 (1936) 37–44.

<sup>68</sup> Bastiaan A. van Kleef et al., *Vijf jaren Oud-Katholiek Verbond van Vakverenigingen*, 1941.

ported by Lagerwey; together with the Amsterdam *pastoor* Cornelis Gerardus van Riel (1886–1938), they were the most outspoken and socially aware rectors in the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands. These activities and developments did not sit altogether comfortably with Old Catholic tradition: until the 1920s Old Catholics had considerable reservations about church statements and actions on social and political matters, as a reaction to Roman Catholic declarations. However, Lagerwey did not identify with this philosophy, as is apparent from both his activities and his written commentaries. For example, in 1934, when the editorial of *De Oud-Katholiek* asserted that it was a religious journal which did not wish to be troubled by political matters such as the Church's relationship to the NSB, the Dutch national-socialist party, he rejected this position as "old liberal", a philosophy that belonged in 1848 but not in the 20th century.<sup>69</sup>

This social engagement has parallels in the pronounced (at least compared to his episcopal colleagues) political positions Lagerwey put forward during the Second World War. While Archbishop Rinkel took no clear position, Lagerwey did.<sup>70</sup> A few examples illustrate this. After his consecration it was Lagerwey rather than Rinkel who "engaged with the other [Dutch] churches".<sup>71</sup> In 1940, a Convent of Protestant Churches, was founded to present a united front against the German occupier; in late 1942 this was renamed *Inter-Kerkelijk Overleg* (IKO: Inter-Church Consultation). From 1941 it also incorporated the Roman Catholic Church. The Old Catholic Church was not a member of the IKO, but it nonetheless had close contacts with it through Lagerwey. This cooperation between the Protestant churches and the Roman Catholic Church was made possible by a groundbreaking visit in 1941 of the secretary of the Dutch Reformed Synod, the Revd Koeno H. E. Gravemeijer (1883–1970) to the Roman Catholic

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<sup>69</sup> Engelbertus Lagerwey (in his capacity as member of the *Raad der Kerken voor praktisch Christendom* ([Council for the Life and Work of the Churches]), letter to the editor, *De Oud-Katholiek* 50 (1934) 121–122, and the article "Kerk en Staat I–VI", *De Oud-Katholiek* 50 (1934) 141, 150–151, 155–156, 168–169, 176–177, 198–199.

<sup>70</sup> See Smit, "Rinkel" (as note 1), 92–95, and also Lou de Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog* (Den Haag: Nijhoff, 1969–1991), 14 vols: vol. 5a (1974), 713.

<sup>71</sup> See OCCNL Amersfoort, Lagerwey Papers, Henk J. W. Verhey, "De Oud-Katholieke Kerk van Nederland tijdens de Duitse bezetting 1940–1945 en de Oud-Katholieke parochie van de H. Willibrordus te Batavia tijdens de Japanse bezetting 1942–1945", Typescript, 1954, 11.

Archbishop of Utrecht, Johannes de Jong (1885–1955). The preparations for this visit took place in the Old Catholic rectory on the Willemsplantsoen, Lagerwey's residence.<sup>72</sup>

It was also Lagerwey who in November 1943, in the name of the Old Catholic bishops, informed Arthur Seyss-Inquart (1892–1946), the German *Reichskommissar* of the occupied Netherlands, of their emphatic opposition to the “German greeting” to which people in the *Arbeitsdienst* were obliged to: “Under the current circumstances, it is hard to conceive of this greeting as anything other than an expression and symbol of the National Socialist view of life and the world.”<sup>73</sup> This letter also recalled the meeting of Protestant and Roman Catholic leaders had with the state commissioner in February 1942, at which time they had “urgently declared their concerns regarding the fact that the *Arbeitsdienst* was forcing National Socialist views of life and the world onto the Dutch youth”.<sup>74</sup> But Lagerwey did more than just talk; his actions also stood up for people. When the German occupiers began picking up men under the age of forty for forced labour in 1943, and they came to Utrecht, the local churches “did what they could to liberate as many people as possible from the hands of the enemy”.<sup>75</sup> The Bishop of Deventer, among others, managed to rescue young people from the columns and help them to hide in the rectory on the Willemsplantsoen, in the Cathedral and in the former *schuilkerk*, the Old Catholic Museum, where sixteen young men were hidden.<sup>76</sup> Those in hiding were supplied with food with the help of Old Catholics in Utrecht. The cathedral was a particularly safe refuge because it was surrounded by important representatives of the occupiers. For example, the chief of police Gerardus J. Kerlen (1890–1943) lived on the Willemsplantsoen, where he was shot and killed in front of his house by the resistance fighter Truus van Lier on 3 September 1943.

To conclude on a more church-insider note: in autumn 1940, the bishops decided to suspend Sunday intercessions for the Queen in the light of the – as they put it – “unclear situation of the constitution of the state”, that is, the fact that since the German invasion the Queen and the government were not actually in the country. When a number of influential laymen

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<sup>72</sup> Verhey, “Kerk” (as note 71), 11.

<sup>73</sup> Verhey, “Kerk” (as note 71), 20 and the letter in appendix 24, 61.

<sup>74</sup> Verhey, “Kerk” (as note 71), 61.

<sup>75</sup> Verhey, “Kerk” (as note 71), 24.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

protested against this, Lagerwey, the then new bishop of Deventer, reinstated an older prayer for peace, which included extensive intercessory prayer for the reigning queen and seemed more fitting to the situation.<sup>77</sup> That same year, the Old Catholic Church published a new hymnal with the clear stamp of Lagerwey.<sup>78</sup> The hymns included not only the national anthem of the Netherlands, *Wilhelmus*, but notably also the “Queen’s Song”, *Geloofd zij God met blijde klanken* (“God is praised with happy sounds”), included as hymn 254.<sup>79</sup> In the early 1940s, two other publications of Lagerwey appeared. At first glance, they appeared to be devotional materials: two volumes of legends about Dutch saints entitled *Helden Gods: legenden van Nederlandse heiligen* (God’s Heroes: Legends of Dutch saints).<sup>80</sup> However, he emphasized in the introduction that this publication

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<sup>77</sup> See Smit, “Rinkel” (as note 1), 92–95, and Andreas Rinkel/Henricus Theodorus Joannes van Vlijmen/Engelbertus Lagerwey, “Herderlijke boodschap over het gebed ‘om den vrede te verzoeken’”, in: Verhey, “Kerk” (as note 71), appendix 17, 51.

<sup>78</sup> *Gezangboek ten dienste van de Oud-Katholieke Kerk van Nederland* (Naarden: Nirota, 1942). This dates back to the work of the Committee for the Catholic Hymnal, created in 1938, which Lagerwey chaired. He was also a member of the Commission on liturgical books and the organists’ council, all established in the same year. He worked on the hymnal both as a compiler and as a writer. Of the hymns included in the 1942 hymnal, nineteen had lyrics written by Lagerwey, while the text of another ninety-four had been revised by him to greater or lesser extent. He remained active as a hymn writer. During the Second World War he produced revisions to the sequences of *Stabat Mater speciosa* and *Stabat Mater dolorosa*, a *Magnificat* and *Ave Maria Maior* for women’s choir and the choral piece *Ecce Homo* and an “Advent Song”. The composer Alex de Jong (1889–1956) set all these pieces to music. In 1948, Lagerwey’s “Lied der eenheid” (“Song of Unity”) was premiered in celebration of the first gathering of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam and it was also performed later that year at the International Old Catholic Congress in Hilversum. In *Graduale; misgezangen ten gebruike bij het misboek ten dienste van de Oud-Katholieke Kerk van Nederland* (plaats: uitgever, 1949), the new translation of the *Dies Irae* was also his.

<sup>79</sup> Verhey, “Kerk” (as note 71), 14.

<sup>80</sup> Engelbertus Lagerwey, *Helden Gods. Legendes van Nederlandse Heiligen* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1940), 2 vols. – This was not Lagerwey’s only publication of hagiographies during these years. The centennial celebrations for St Willibrord saw the publication of his *Die Legende van Sinte Willibroert* (Maastricht: Leiter-Nypels, 1940). This was a reproduction taken from the *Legenda Aurea* printed by Gheraert Leeu in Gouda in 1478. The “explanation” by Lagerwey was in reality a translation of the old Dutch text reproduced in the following pages. The scholarly introduction was written by the Franciscan Bonaventura Kruytwagen (1874–1954). This publication was notable not only for its contents but also for the ecumenical effort behind it. Three

was responding to the times, for these saints had “showed the strength of their faith by bringing the blessing of the Gospels, as ‘pioneers’ of Christian civilization and society”.<sup>81</sup> These two volumes were also intended to stimulate the defense and continuation of a set of values that in Lagerwey’s eyes were under threat. His continued emphasis on these themes is also evident in his 1951 book about the life and practice of the Old Catholic Church, which criticizes those who would like to make a strong separation between church affairs and social engagement.<sup>82</sup>

The ecclesial and the sociological, the political and the social all came together for Lagerwey. In his life, social engagement did not contradict a love for history and liturgy, but rather formed part of his unified vision of church and theology.

### Catholic and Ecumenical

Lagerwey’s most influential ministry, as pastor of the Cathedral of St Gertrudis and Bishop of Deventer, coincided with the years of rapid development in ecumenical affairs, and in particular after the Oxford and Edinburgh conferences in 1937 with the uniting of the movements for Faith and Order and Life and Work to form the World Council of Churches. Within the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands and the Union of Utrecht, ecumenical developments also (re)gained momentum after some impasses at the turn of the century. In 1920, the Orthodox churches resumed the conversations with the Old Catholic Churches. In 1925, the Dutch church recognized Anglican orders, which cleared the way for full communion with the Anglican Communion in 1931.<sup>83</sup> In 1927, the Church decided to be represented within the Faith and Order conference in Lausanne.<sup>84</sup>

Lagerwey was closely involved in these events, and his involvement reveals another way in which he saw the Dutch Old Catholic tradition as

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years later, another historic publication appeared: Alexander W. Byvanck/Engelbertus Lagerwey, *Het Brevier van Beatrix van Assendelft* (Leiden: Brill, 1943).

<sup>81</sup> Lagerwey, *Helden* I, 10–11. In honor of Lagerwey’s 70th birthday an expanded edition of *Helden Gods* was published as *Boden en Helden Gods. Legenden van in Noord-Nederland veel vereerde heiligen* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1950).

<sup>82</sup> Lagerwey, *Kerk* (as note 6).

<sup>83</sup> On this matter, see the overview in Smit, *Ecclesiologies* (as note 4), 209–213.

<sup>84</sup> See e.g. Smit, *Ecclesiologies* (as note 4), 183–199.

interwoven with political and social developments.<sup>85</sup> This was particularly evident during his years in Utrecht: he represented the Old Catholic bishops at the Lausanne Committee in 1935, and at the Stockholm Committee in 1936, the Dutch committees working to further the work of Faith and Order and Life and Work respectively, which would ultimately lead to the creation of the World Council of Churches. In 1937, after Rinkel's election as archbishop, Lagerwey took over a number of ecumenical responsibilities from him. Since 1927 Lagerwey, together with the layman Dr Adrianus Johannes van den Bergh (1883–1943), professor of Canon Law at the Old Catholic Seminary, had been involved in the Dutch branch of the World Conference on Faith and Order, which from 1937 worked to support the formation of the World Council of Churches. In 1938, Utrecht hosted a combined conference of Faith and Order and Life and Work, initiating a process which, interrupted by the Second World War, led to the formation of the World Council of Churches ten years later. Rinkel was a delegate to this conference, but was unable to attend much of it. He stipulated that Lagerwey should have the right to attend all meetings, and to serve in his stead during his absences.<sup>86</sup>

During the Second World War, Lagerwey remained active in ecumenical circles, and reported on these efforts in 1946.<sup>87</sup> After the War, he became the first secretary-general of the *Oecumenische Raad van kerken in Nederland* (Ecumenical Council of Churches in the Netherlands).<sup>88</sup> This partnership, restarted by a number of Dutch churches in 1946, built on the foundation laid in the Netherlands in 1935 by the Ecumenical Union and the Dutch Lausanne Committee. After the War he also joined the Inter-church Reconstruction Committee and subsequently the (Dutch) Founda-

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<sup>85</sup> This High Church – that is to say, Catholic – approach manifested itself in several ways. For example, the choice of text for the first Mass, on November 20, 1905: “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:18), and an article such as E. Lagerwey, “Amt, Wort und Sakrament in ihrer Verbundenheit”, *IKZ* 27 (1937) 24–41, while his connections between this theology and political and social engagement appears in, for example, the series of articles on *Kerk en Staat* (Church and State) in 1934, culminating in his *Kerk* (as note 6).

<sup>86</sup> Smit, “Rinkel” (as note 1), 53.

<sup>87</sup> Engelbertus Lagerwey, “Die ökumenische Arbeit in den Niederlanden während des Krieges”, *IKZ* 36 (1946) 149–69.

<sup>88</sup> See, e.g., the report of the first meeting in the *Utrechts Nieuwsblad*, 7 May 1946, 1.



tion for Ecumenical Assistance for Churches and Refugees.<sup>89</sup> In September 1946 he visited Great Britain to deepen relationships with the Church of England and the Scottish Episcopal Church. This is only a sample of Lagerwey's many ecumenical contacts and activities.<sup>90</sup> The celebration of the Willibrord Centenary in 1939 typifies Lagerwey's efforts in this area; here he could bring together his deep interest in tradition and his close attention to current affairs and ecumenical networking.

In the politically sensitive years of the 1930s, Lagerwey worked on one of the most important projects of his life: the big exhibition celebrating the Centenary of Willibrord in 1939, commemorating the 1200th anniversary of the death of first archbishop of Utrecht.<sup>91</sup> Lagerwey had proposed the exhibition and the commemoration several years earlier, in the summer of 1936,<sup>92</sup> but in all the preparations, he remained in the background. This exhibition led to the first notable efforts towards cooperation between Roman Catholics and Old Catholics:<sup>93</sup> the opening of the exhibition brought about the first informal contact between Roman Catholic and Old Catholic bishops.<sup>94</sup> Although the exhibition ended prematurely due to the outbreak of the Second World War on 1 September 1939, plans to hold an ecume-

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<sup>89</sup> See: hV, "Levensloop" (as note 9), 56.

<sup>90</sup> Further efforts included, for example, involvement in the conversation between psychiatry and theology, as noted by Jacob A. van Belzen, "Waar is God in de psychiatrie? H. C. Rümke, in: Theologisch-Psychiatrisch Gezelschap, 31-10-1946", *Tijdschrift voor Psychiatrie* 32 (1990) 42–53: 43–44. After his death the *Utrechts Nieuwsblad* named him as one of the members of an ecumenical group of writers who had contributed to the paper, *Utrechts Nieuwsblad*, 14 March 1959, 1.

<sup>91</sup> See generally: Antonius van Schaik, "Waar alle richtingen samenkomen. De Willibrordherdenking van 1939", *Jaarboek Oud-Utrecht* 1981 (1981) 326–356. For the organizer's own vision, see, for example: Engelbertus Lagerwey, "De Willibrordtentoonstelling", *Historia* 5 (1939) 99–102. For an impression of the preparations, see also the report in *Utrechts Nieuwsblad*, 4 March 1939, 3.

<sup>92</sup> For this and the following, van Schaik, "De Willibrordherdenking" (as note 91), 326–327.

<sup>93</sup> For the ecumenical nature of these preparations, van Schaik, "De Willibrordherdenking" (as note 91).

<sup>94</sup> See Smit, "Rinkel" (as note 1), 63–64; Peter-Ben Smit, "Oud-katholieke waarnemers op het Tweede Vaticaans Concilie (1962–1965)", *Trajecta* 22 (2013) 29–56: 33 and van Schaik, "De Willibrordherdenking" (as note 91). These meetings were one of the many factors that played a role in the development of a Roman Catholic-Old Catholic dialogue. On the history of this dialogue, see: Jan Visser, "Zur Vorgeschichte und Entstehung der Internationalen Römisch-Katholisch-Alt-katholischen Dialogkommission", *IKZ* 100 (2010) 6–24.

nical service on 7 November were not abandoned, and the Archbishops of Canterbury and York – England being the country of Willibrord’s origin – were represented at the service by the Bishops of Gloucester and Fulham. Further Old Catholic-Anglican services were held in St Gertrudis Cathedral on 6 and 7 November.<sup>95</sup> On 12 November, Lagerwey preached on the topic of the commemoration of Willibrord in the Great Church, or the Church of St Lebuinus, in Deventer.<sup>96</sup> Lagerwey also wrote an article for a special issue of *De Oud Katholiek* dedicated to the commemoration.<sup>97</sup> Amongst all the lofty speeches printed in that year’s *De Oud Katholiek*, only Lagerwey’s considered the contemporary global situation, asking:

How will our generation act when the powers that make faith the enemy trample the church underfoot? How will we react when nationalism goes too far or weakened internationalism become more dangerous threats than the material devastation of buildings and theft of its possessions in bygone days?<sup>98</sup>

When Lagerwey took ecumenical positions towards the end of his career in 1951, he believed that it was not hard for him in ecumenical efforts “to reach the desired objectivity, because he experienced such an inner and upstanding piety among many representatives of other churches, in gratitude for which he was bound to humility and estimation”.<sup>99</sup> In “Our Place in the Ecumenical World”, the concluding chapter of his book *De Oud Katholieke Kerk* (1951) he expanded on ecumenism. First, he gave a detailed, if not unbiased, version of the history of his church in the ecumenical movement, arguing that Rome wrongly claims the attribute “Catholic” and disfigures and maims the handed down pledge of faith by adding to it private theological opinions.<sup>100</sup> He could not approve of Reformed churches that remain on the sidelines of the ecumenical movement “on the grounds of their judgments of groups of Christians they have not understood”.<sup>101</sup> Towards the Protestants, Lagerwey remained inflexible on matters of ministry and the means of grace.

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<sup>95</sup> See Charlotte Methuen, “‘Close and friendly relations’: The Church of England and the Old Catholic Churches 1933–1950”, in: Anja Goller et al. (eds), *Weg-Gemeinschaft. Festschrift für Günter Esser* (Alt-Katholischer Bistumsverlag: Bonn 2015), 89–106.

<sup>96</sup> *De Oud-Katholiek* 55 (1939) 365.

<sup>97</sup> *De Oud-Katholiek* 55 (1939) 336–338.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 337–338.

<sup>99</sup> Lagerwey, *Kerk* (as note 6), 8.

<sup>100</sup> Lagerwey, *Kerk* (as note 6), 119.

<sup>101</sup> Lagerwey, *Kerk* (as note 6), 119–120.

The Catholic ministry, with the blessing of bBishop and priests, can never conform to the Presbyterian scheme. Laying on of hands in the name of the Church is appointment through the Holy Spirit, and passing of this office determines apostolic succession. The one Church calls for the one ministry. That is the Old Catholic teaching.<sup>102</sup>

He wanted to draw these distinctions clearly and guarded against watering them down during public lectures. Even though the Old Catholic Church is small,

It is rooted in the centuries-old Church of the Lord and carries the heritage of the old Catholic Church. Therein lies its value and meaning, and even its livelihood, as long as it is able to keep the pledge entrusted to it pure and pass it on unbroken.<sup>103</sup>

Lagerwey's ecumenical efforts, whether organizational or personal, bilateral or multilateral, show him to have had a clear ecclesiological and orderly aspect ("faith and order"), based in his primary interest in the tradition and theology of the Dutch Church Catholic. This deep rootedness was also worked out in ecumenical contexts via, for example, the centenary of Willibrord in 1939. In addition, however, Lagerwey's ecumenical contacts and activities often served as expressions of his political and social interests.

## Conclusion

Considering Lagerwey's life and work in terms of the development of the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands gives rise to several possible conclusions. First, Lagerwey was and remained intensely involved in the character of his church and its development. The combination of his interests in history, art history, liturgy, and hagiography with a strong concern for ecumenism and close attention to and outspoken opinions on social and political affairs made him a notable personality both within church circles and – where his activities and the recognition he received went beyond those circles – outside. His position was characterized by a synthesis of the philosophy and legacy of the *Cleresie* and of (Germanophone) Old Catholicism, as can be seen from his use of the devotional and theological traditions of the *Cleresie* on the one hand; and his commitment to ecumenical

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<sup>102</sup> Lagerwey, *Kerk* (as note 6), 122.

<sup>103</sup> Lagerwey, *Kerk* (as note 6), 123.

mission and his openness for the challenges and questions of the modern world of the Old Catholic movement of the later nineteenth century on the other.

He consistently connected both these fields with a strong engagement in social and political matters; though he did this during a time of great church involvement in such issues, the level of his engagement nonetheless attracted attention from others outside his church. However, it was not this engagement that represented his lasting impact on the development of the identity of his church; he would have been disappointed to realize that his greatest legacy had been his care for the church's tradition and his efforts to further ecumenism, and not his political or social efforts.

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### *Zusammenfassung*

Engelbertus Lagerwey (1880–1959), altkatholischer Priester und von 1941 bis zu seinem Tod Bischof von Deventer, war für sein grosses Interesse an Liturgie, Kunst, Architektur, Geschichte und Hagiographie bekannt, die er als Elemente der Tradition der Altkatholischen Kirche der Niederlande sah. Für Lagerwey war die Tradition ein Werkzeug der Mission, die er mit grossem ökumenischen und sozial-politischen Engagement vertrat. Aufgrund seines Privatarchivs untersucht dieser Artikel Lagerweys Grundeinstellung sowie die theologischen und praktischen Zugänge, mit denen er zur Entwicklung der Identität der Altkatholischen Kirche der Niederlande beitrug. Sein Leben und seine Wirkung werden in den Kontext seiner Zeit und seiner Kirche eingeordnet.