

Christian Democrat Internationalism

Its Action in Europe and Worldwide
from post World War II until the 1990s

Volume III: The European People's Party
Continental and Social Cooperation

Jean-Dominique Durand (ed.)



EUROCLIO
STUDIES AND DOCUMENTS



P.I.E. Peter Lang

From September 2011 to December 2013 the Luigi Sturzo Institute in Rome along with the Centre of European Studies planned a series of international scientific meetings to study one highly important political subject: the commitment of Christian Democrats on an international level. This project has been organised thanks to the support of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, and the International Labour Organisation.

Internationalism is a Key Element for the Christian Democrat Identity. In fact, CD is a political movement of thought and action whose roots lie in a specific ideology: to use the German word *Weltanschauung*, it is based on a particular framework of ideas and beliefs that leads the party to interpret the relationship between men and nations from an international point of view, ensuring the human being a central place in every social policy.

The Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel, wrote in a Message to these Meetings:

We can consider ourselves very lucky that 50 years ago forward-thinking personalities founded the World Union of Christian Democrats. From then on, the world, through globalisation, has been deeply changed. Events that take place in other continents immediately impact on our lives. We will be able to protect ourselves from terrorism, achieve economic and social security, and defend our environment only through common global action. This is the task of our generation: to overcome these global challenges. [...]. Our parties and our political organisations share a common Christian ideal of man. This ideal, grounded on the inalienability of human dignity, is at the core of one important value: to this man has linked a social and economic model that combines economic success and social responsibility.

Her message clearly shows the need to use historical knowledge, to return to and explore a rich and challenging past as well as to develop a reflection on and a course of action for the present and the future.

Jean-Dominique Durand, Professor of Contemporary History at the University of Lyon (France), is a specialist in the History of contemporary Christianity.

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WAR II UNTIL THE 1990s**

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Bruxelles · Bern · Berlin · Frankfurt am Main · New York · Oxford · Wien

EUROCLIO is a scientific and editorial project, a network of research institutions and researchers, and an ideas forum. EUROCLIO as an editorial project consists of two aspects: the first concerns studies and documents, the second concerns tools. Both are aimed at making the results of research more accessible, and also at opening up paths through the history of European construction/integration/unification.

The EUROCLIO series meets a dual objective:

- to provide reference tools for research,
- to provide a platform for this research in terms of the publication of results.

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The Studies and Documents series consists of monographs, collections of articles, conference proceedings, and collections of texts with notes for teaching purposes.

The References series consists of bibliographies, guides and other tools. It thus contributes to the creation of a database making up a "Permanent catalogue of sources and bibliographies on European construction".

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In memory of Wilfried Martens

Former Prime Minister of Belgium

President of the European People's Party

President of the Centre for European Studies



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INTRODUCTION

Pier Ferdinando CASINI

President of the Centrist Democrat International

I would like to pay tribute and express my deepest gratitude to President Mazzotta and the Sturzo Institute for their work on the Christian Democrat International (CDI) and the European People's Party. It is an extremely important contribution, in line with the desire to preserve our memory as well as the memory of our political movement, especially because our history is often written by others. Furthermore, there was no such clear and systematic work on the CDI before theirs, and I am particularly grateful for that.

The first time we met at the Luigi Sturzo Institute to talk about this work – which was carried out with great prestige and proficiency – Wilfried Martens was there, too. I would like to take this opportunity to pay homage to the late Wilfried Martens, who as the founder of the EPP was a great European protagonist, as well as an eminent supporter to our Christian Democrat movement throughout the world.

Time goes by and some may think of the Christian Democrat International as an archaeological find from the past. Of course, history is long, times change, globalisation continuously identifies new leaders and new issues, but I believe that everything that has happened in the last few years has proved the soundness of our beliefs and roots. For years we talked about the social market economy, then perhaps we forgot about it, precisely when it was becoming a predominant and current topic – just think about the damage that the financialisation of the economy and speculation has caused in the economic and social worlds, replacing a healthy market economy. Today we have completely different problems, but we have to start again from our roots, which are the only valid points of reference for the future.

The weaknesses are obvious; among them, an increasingly widespread populism that stems from politics' inability to offer clear answers. Anti-politics is largely the result of the mistakes made by politics, and this should make us think thoroughly. Today there are continents in which the CDI is undergoing a profound transformation, for example in Latin America (except for, perhaps, in Chile), where our movements have been replaced by left-wing or right-wing populist movements. We carried out rather extensive work in Africa, despite the difficulties in penetrating a territory in which tribal and territorial logic have not yet been replaced by political logic.

In this respect, I hope that not only the Christian Democrat International but also the Socialist International become deeply rooted in those countries: it would be a clear sign that politics is starting to become the point of reference, in contrast to today, when it is struggling to establish itself and, in fact, remains an option for a chosen few.

I would like to make one last consideration on Europe. The elections for the renewal of the European Parliament are going to take place in May, and I am convinced that contrasting anti-European populism – which is pervasive not only in Italy but also in many other countries – with the logic of Euro-rhetoric will lead to a tragic defeat for Europe itself. This is why, if we are not able to contrast anti-European populism with the idea of a Europe that is changing up a gear and is perceived differently by its citizens, we will have an overwhelming situation to deal with.

Today, it is no longer enough to express our desires for a wonderful utopia. Unfortunately, Europe is perceived as a reality that is distant from the problems of European citizens. One such example is Europe's inability to build real relations with the Mediterranean area. Today the Arab Spring has degenerated into tribal fighting – just think of the situations in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia, not to mention the uncertainty in Syria and a considerable weakening of the Christian testimony in the Middle East.

Therefore, a Europe which is also able to address the Mediterranean area and radically change its own economic policy approach is needed now more than ever. It would be difficult for a Europe that is influenced only by Germany to meet the needs and requests of public opinion.

Of course, fiscal consolidation is of the essence. Maastricht has imposed precise constraints, which we have started to comply with – first with the Monti Government and now with the Letta Government. A change of tune is necessary in Europe, otherwise we risk being dramatically overwhelmed. If we do not take this into account at the forthcoming European elections – and I say this is as a convinced Europeanist – there will be a clear defeat.

If there were a referendum on the Euro in Italy today, it would be difficult to obtain a majority in favour of maintaining this currency. I know full well that leaving the Euro would be self-destructive and that Italy would be forced to pay huge costs, but I also know that complaining about dangers or mistakes is no longer enough: it is necessary to go beyond all this.

That is why we have to make an effort to implement practical projects, especially for young people. First of all, youth unemployment figures demonstrate this: almost 50% of young people are unemployed (these statistics are not too distant from those of Spain and France). Of course, connecting with young people is essential, but it's not enough. Ideas, values and political initiatives are necessary. Greater attention should

be paid to young people, and rigor must go hand-in-hand with social relations, development and growth.

The Luigi Sturzo Institute has proven once again that – although there are many foundations – only a few of them carry out true research work.

Roberto MAZZOTTA

President of the Luigi Sturzo Institute

Two very brief remarks. First of all, the historical research work on Christian Democrat internationalism points out that the endeavours of a long-standing political tradition led the Christian Democrat idea to make important contributions to the international and European scene, in Africa, South America, and the present situation we can see that there is a pressing need for this tradition not to be set aside. My second remark is that Pier Ferdinando Casini has said some things that can be agreed with completely, and it is appropriate to spend a few words on them, precisely to give meaning to the work we have done, with particular reference to Europe. Of course this is not a priority in today's complex world, other areas also deserve emphasis; however, the European elections are approaching, and I believe some things must be said. The tradition of the European dream as the "Europe of peoples" has always been important. We put together the "Europe of States", but of course, there might be some disparities between this "Europe of States" and the will of the peoples. In order to keep states together, it is necessary to be able to speak about "peoples" again. This is a political issue. Technical solutions are essential, but a political design is missing. Technical issues are very important and often have a wide range of options, which must be expressed and conveyed, but authoritative political proposals and leaders are missing. Transitions towards change are not always welcome, and when a political project is not there, there is the risk of unwelcome things conflicting with popular consensus. Europe could opt for a step change, which does not mean that those who have more give to those who have less as charity: this is not what is missing. What is missing is a common political project, and I believe this shortcoming needs to be addressed. The first way to do so is to make sure many people realise this lack of project exists: it is necessary for politicians to be aware of the weakness of their political proposals in the absence of a political framework.

Is the PPE a political subject? Yes. Then, it should work as a political subject and it should not absorb everything and its opposite, yet it should be welcoming. Secondly, the pathway to European was not short and it was extraordinary. I remember a great Italian who was very passionate about his country and very much afraid of it at the same time: Carlo Azeglio Ciampi. He saw an "anchor" in external constraints, in particular the exchange rate constraint.

Creating the currency was not a simple matter; it was huge. Europe was partly created through monetary decisions. Without a common currency, the French and the Germans would have the same old difficulties; it was a decision-making leap forward. But how can a common currency exist without the presence of an integrated internal tax system? A single currency alone is weak. The fact is that an integrated tax policy requires even more demanding political passages. However, there is no way around it, and it will happen only through a complete integration of all our political institutions. Our institutes can be helpful within these pathways. It is necessary for Christian Democrat political foundations in Germany, Poland and Italy to take this debate into their own hands and connect with one another. We already have a good collaboration going on with the Adenauer Stiftung and with the Polish. Most of all, let us remember that – besides a shift in gear – the completion of an institutional integration is essential. Thank you all.