

PROJECT APPLICATION

Project Title:

Transnational Party Cooperation between Christian Democratic and Conservative Parties in Europe from 1965 to 1979 (Editorial Project)

Applicants and Potential Recipients:

Karl von Vogelsang-Institut zur Erforschung der Geschichte der Christlichen Demokratie in Österreich (Vienna) and Institut für Geschichte der Stiftung Universität Hildesheim

Project Leader:

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Academic Employees:

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Possible International Cooperation Partners:

Katholieke Documentatie- en Onderzoekscentrum voor Religie, Cultuur en Samenleving (KADOC) KU Leuven (Belgium), Konrad Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), Archiv für Christlich-Demokratische Politik (ACDP) St. Augustin (Federal Republic of Germany), Archiv für Christlich-Soziale Politik der Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung (HSS) Munich (Federal Republic of Germany)

Project Duration:

January 1, 2009-December 31, 2012 (48 months = four years)

Filing Date:

Autumn 2008

I. Description of Contents

1. The History and Organizational Development of Christian Democratic and Conservative Transnational Party Cooperation in Europe

After the Second World War, Catholic-conservative and Christian Democratic people's parties played an increasingly more important role in Western Europe. After 1945, there was no lack of new incentives, nor of necessary challenges for transnational contacts and organized party cooperation. Nevertheless, the secret meetings of the "Geneva Circle" (1947-56) as well cooperation within the "Nouvelles Equipes Internationales" (NEI), which was formed in 1947, up through its renaming and transformation into the "European Union of Christian Democrats" (EUCD) in 1965, were characterized by continuous debates on how far the coordination should go in both political and ideological matters as well as on joint action at the national and international levels, and to what degree existing organizations were sufficient or should have been better streamlined and strengthened.

During the period of the NEI, it was at first national, cultural, and linguistic barriers that obstructed the formation of an intensive transnational Christian Democratic party organization. In addition to this, during the period immediately after the war, there was also an absence of a correspondingly distinct European public that would have created a sufficient sounding board for successful and effective party cooperation.

Just the structure of the successor organization, the EUCD, makes clear the difference with the NEI and a new self-awareness. In the NEI, there were national delegations that were composed, as applicable, of representatives from several parties that felt connected with the body of thought of the NEI. If several parties existed in one country, these formed a single delegation. The bodies of the EUCD were the Congress, the Political Bureau, the Executive Bureau, the President, and the General Secretariat.

The Congress, which met every three years, set the basis of policy. In addition to the Political Bureau, ten representatives of the national delegations and ten members of the Christian Democratic faction in the European Parliament were eligible for the Congress. The Political Bureau was the leadership body of the Union. It continued the lines provided by the Congress in practical policy. It made decisions on new admissions, controlled the management of finances, and took care of outside contacts. The Executive Committee had a controlling function. It supervised the implementation of the resolutions by the Bureau. The president represented the Union externally and chaired congresses and meetings. In December 1978, seventeen political parties from thirteen European states belonged to the EUCD, and specifically from the Federal Republic of Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, France, San Marino, Ireland, and Malta.

In contrast to the NEI, in the EUCD only one member party could be represented per country. It was remarkable that within the EUCD over the course of the years, the so-called "Political Committee" was formed from the Christian Democratic parties of the EC states. This committee had the function of creating a lasting institutional connection between the parties and factions of the Community at the European level. In addition, the Committee also prepared the founding of the European People's Party (EPP). In terms of content, during the 1970s the Committee dealt with the problems of the CSCE, East-West relations in general, and the return of Portugal and Spain to democracy. The NEI and the EUCD expressly referred to Christian principles, and thus civil parties of the center with related but not identical platforms were excluded. This concerned states with a different political culture and only small parties that declared themselves Christian, such as the United Kingdom and the Scandinavian countries.

During the entire time of its existence, there existed within the aforementioned party cooperation a central line of separation and conflict between Christian social left liberal parties and Christian democratic conservative parties. This ideological differentiation was already recognizable early on. The first group included the Mouvement Republicain Populaire (MRP) in France, the Parti Social Chretien (PSC) and the Christlike Volkspartij (CVP) in Belgium, the Katholieke Volkspartij (KVP) in the Netherlands, and the Democrazia Cristiana (DC) in Italy. The second group consisted first and foremost of the Österreichische Volkspartei (ÖVP) and the German Christlich-

Demokratische Union and the Christlich-Soziale Union (CDU/CSU). Added to this was the fact that the former parties stood more or less for a partially core European orientation with a loose transnational form of organization which, after the NEI, attempted to create one platform within the EUCD. The CDU/CSU and the ÖVP, on the other hand, stood more for a greater European-conservative orientation which, with the “European Democratic Union” (EDU) that was founded in 1978, attempted to create an equivalent for the European People’s Party (EPP) that was brought into being as a faction of Christian Democrats in the European Parliament and consequently with the intent to create a broader base.

The transnational “European People’s Party” (EPP) federation of Christian Democratic member parties in the European Community that was founded on April 29, 1976 clearly differed from earlier forms of Christian Democratic cooperation. The official inaugural assembly took place on July 8, 1976 in Luxembourg. It was the intention of the CDU and the CSU to include the British conservatives and the French civil groups in the party alliance, but they ran into the categorical rejection by the Italian, Belgian, and Dutch parties.

Against this background, the ÖVP, with the support of the German union parties of the CDU (Helmut Kohl) and the CSU (Franz-Josef Strauß), and the British Conservatives made efforts to extend the narrow ideological framework of “Christian Democracy” and to create a broader spectrum of the cooperation of European parties of the center both within and outside of the EC. It was apparently also a German goal, in particular of Helmut Kohl, to use the ÖVP as a sort of place marker or as an instrument and a means to an end, in order to establish with the help of the EDU a broad platform of all conservative-civil parties in Europe and to build a majority in the European Parliament (EP), which in the future would be directly elected.

Three motives were decisive for the founding of the EDU: dissatisfaction with the increasingly meaningless EUCD, the predominance of the Socialist International with the “big three” of Olof Palme, Willy Brandt, and Bruno Kreisky, and the forced absence of the non-EC parties from the EPP.

In 1978, conservative and Christian Democratic parties consequently joined together for common work in the EDU. This new organization did not, however, lead to a consensus with respect to a forced policy of integration. The term “European

integration” was hardly used; rather, the discussion was of “European cooperation”. Nevertheless, in the view of the EDU, the Europe of that time should not be isolated by its existing borders. The goal was a greater Europe in the sense of an ideological and geopolitical homogeneity of civil democratic parties with an intended influence on opposition groupings in the communist hemisphere.

The EDU was intended as a catch basin of the center-right parties, especially as a counterweight to the Socialist International (SI), but also as a substitute for those Christian Democratic and conservative parties which were not accepted into the EPP as a result of their ideological or programmatic points of difference or of their countries not being members of the EC. The ideological rifts between Christian Democrats and center-right parties, especially the British conservatives and French neo-Gaullists, were in no way reconciled with the two-track (EUCD-EDU) arrangement. The relationship between the EDU and the EUCP or the EPP which, since the founding of the EDU was from time to time also to be designated as dualism, continued to exist. In any case, more and more European parties attempted to overcome this dilemma within the framework of the EPP as a faction in the European Parliament.

2. Discourse Topics of Transnational Party Cooperation between Christian Democratic and Conservative Parties in Europe from 1965 to 1979

In the 1960s and 1970s, it was not only topics of policy regarding Europe and integration, but also matters of world policy that were already predominating for Christian Democratic and conservative discourses at the intraparty and public cross-national level. These concerned major issues of decision, such as de Gaulle’s policy of the “empty chair” (1965-66), the “Luxembourg Compromise” (1966), the merger of the community bodies of the EC (1965-67), the early realization of the EC customs union and the intervention by troops of individual Warsaw Pact states in Czechoslovakia (1968), the Hague Summit (1969), the integration that took place after the successful conclusion of negotiations for the “northern enlargement” with the United Kingdom, Denmark, and Ireland into the European Communities (starting in 1973), the “southern enlargement” of the EC that was lined up for preparation with Greece, Portugal, and Spain, the coordination of the European states that was already set up in the Europe-

wide battle against terrorism (keyword: “Trevi Group”), the preparations that were being made for the upcoming first direct elections for the European Parliament, and the preparation for the creation of a European Currency System (1979).

In addition, a series of important global issues began to influence and dominate the policies of the European parties. These centered on the conduct of the USA’s war in Vietnam, managing with the energy crises as a result of the two “oil shocks” (1973 and 1979), dealing with the collapse of the Bretton Woods International Monetary System (IMS) and the relationship of European currencies to the dollar, the reactions to the maintaining and continuation of the policies of security and détente in Europe (the CSCE) after the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan (1979), and last but not least, a positioning in the debate regarding the so-called “Third World” states as well as the North-South conflict. In Africa and in Asia, the spread of communism seemed to march on, which made corresponding counterstrategies necessary for the Christian Democratic and conservative parties of Europe.

On top of this, the EDU attempted to focus political issues as central topics, issues which up to that point had achieved little or no economic relevance and political attention; themes which, in subsequent years, turned into key European issues. For example, in the steering committees of the EDU, there were discussions for the first time at the broad, multinational, political level about satellite television, high technology, or environmental policy as common European domains in global competition. In addition, although there was still comparatively little success, endeavors were made to not let the Socialist International have a monopoly with regard to European mediation activity in the Near East and Middle East.

Since its founding, the EDU attempted to support new democracies outside of Europe and, at the same time, to combat communist and totalitarian tendencies. It consequently directed its attention very early on not only toward developments in Eastern Europe, but also toward topics outside of Europe. Flash points in Central and South America (such as Nicaragua and El Salvador) consistently required a corresponding engagement by the EDU. This occurred at a time when the Socialist International was still to a large extent backing the recognition of and cooperation with communist forces. An end point of this development, which indeed lies far outside the

actual observation period of the project, was formed by the meeting of the EDU in June 1989 in Budapest, where it held a meeting of its "Europe Committee" as the first major Party Internationale and thus substantially contributed to the strengthening of the new democracies and civic societies.

Additional activities took place for the most part on a bilateral basis between EDU member parties and the new partners, whereby the EDU office in Vienna took on a mediation and coordination function in many cases. With this outlook, the increasing activity and growing relevance of the EDU will also be explained with a view toward Central and Eastern Europe.

Within this context, the Council of Europe is first and foremost to be mentioned. Through their work in the Council of Europe, it was specifically Christian Democratic parliamentarians who achieved a "European standing" and were able to make their first marks with regard to Europe policy in the parliamentary assemblies of the Council of Europe. This was of particular significance in the years up to 1979 (the first direct election for the European Parliament) when the European Community in no way had parliamentary legitimation. The issue of consultations, cooperation, and separations between the Christian Democratic politicians of the different countries will also have to be taken into consideration in this project.

It is particularly in the period of radical change in social policy of the 1960s and 1970s that by means of the Council of Europe, points of view that were ideological, visionary, but also pragmatic can be recognized. Examples of this that may be cited here are the initiatives by the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, Franz Karasek, with respect to a positive adjustment of the Council of Europe on East-West cooperation as well as the international "safeguarding and validity of human rights", which was postulated for the first time on the European stage.

At another level, the transnational party cooperation was oriented toward concrete topics. Through the change of numerous social norms, the labor union movement was also compelled to deal with new paradigms and to take into account problems that had undergone transformation. After most of Europe's trade union associations had decided upon common economic cooperation, transnational forms of organization, declarations of intent, and coordination of content gained significantly in importance. Especially from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, a tremendously receptive

and positive attitude prevailed with respect to European integration in the majority of trade union remarks and statements.

The reasons for the change of the labor unions to (at least partially) Euroskeptics and reform obstructionists appear to be essential for this work. In spite of the circumstance that both the Austrian trade union alliance (ÖGB) and the European trade union alliance were and are dominated by socialists or social democrats, the contribution of the Christian trade unionists cannot be underestimated. In particular, it was the ÖVP politicians and ÖGB vice presidents Erwin Altenburger and Johann Gassner who, within the framework of the international cooperation of the 1960s and 1970s, raised important questions and problem areas with other Western European conservative and Christian Democratic employee representatives. Nevertheless, the European Christian trade unionists soon expressed criticism of the political structures of the EEC and saw first and foremost deficiencies in democratic developments within the EEC. In any case, it seems to be noteworthy for the work that with the cooling off of the trade unions' enthusiasm for Europe, there was nearly at the same time a particularly close relationship between the European Christian Democratic parties. Thus beginning in 1975, ÖVP party head Josef Taus developed a separate strategy in Austria of a "European rapprochement" without having at the same time to join the EEC. The extent to which the ÖVP's enthusiasm for Europe was additionally stimulated by the global activities of Austrian chancellor Bruno Kreisky, leading to lasting party-policy concepts, is also to be studied by this project.

II. Requirements for the Editorial Project and the Situation with Sources

1. Initial Situation

The history of political parties in Europe after 1945 has been relatively well researched and documented, in any case first and foremost starting from national party politics, domestic policy and its subtopics (such as election campaigns), and intraparty line-ups (personalities, factional disputes, and the formation of camps). The "foreign policy" of

the parties – that is, to be understood almost as the activity of “non-state actors” with a view toward cross-border contacts and transnational cooperation – beginning in the second half of the 1960s for the Christian Democratic-conservative party perspective is still an expressed wish for research in the sphere of contemporary history which makes fundamental research necessary. In general, it is necessary to emphasize that European contemporary history research in general and that of Germany and Austria in particular have begun to research the 1970s only in few first attempts.

A fundamental research project on the history of transnational Christian Democratic party cooperation in the years from 1945 to 1965 was already supported by the Fonds zur Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung (the Austrian Science Fund, or FWF) starting in 1997-98 (FWF - project number P 12 089/OEK/SOZ “Europäische Christdemokraten”) and concluded in 2001, and it was published in 2004 in Munich by the SAUR-Verlag, which is most highly renowned internationally for editorial projects.¹ To that extent, the project leaders (Michael Gehler and Dieter A. Binder) already possess relevant expertise.

A research project that is established on the basis of these works and that correspondingly has an equal methodological and organizational orientation continues to be lacking in the literature, that is, a comparable and comparative reappraisal of the development and attitude of transnational party cooperation of European Christian Democrats and conservatives from 1965 to 1979. The time parameters coincide with the founding of the EUCD and the first direct elections in the European Parliament. A later continued study up to the “year of change” 1989 – and beyond – may be suggested as a future wish for research.

2. Challenges

What makes the new section of study from 1965 to 1979 more difficult in comparison to the period of the “Geneva Circle” (1947-56) and the NEI (1947-65) with a view toward

¹ Michael Gehler and Wolfram Kaiser (eds.), *Transnationale Parteienkooperation der europäischen Christdemokraten: Dokumente 1945-1965/Coopération transnationale des partis démocrates-chrétiens en Europe: Documents 1945-1965 (Transnational Party Cooperation of European Christian Democrats: Documents 1945-1965)*, Munich: 2004.

the subsequent years are three serious differences: we will have to deal with not only what has in the meantime developed into three forms of organization (the EUCD headquartered in Rome, the EDU headquartered in Vienna, and the EPP headquartered in Brussels), but also with a far more comprehensive situation with sources and an evolved, far broader thematic agenda (including international and global issues), and thus on one hand there is a greater concentration on German-language archives, but an expansion of the documents to two volumes appears to be very advisable. That can be established as follows: experience has shown that the German-language archives also reflect the positions and assessments of other European parties (the CVP, DC, KVP, etc.), just by the circumstance that the minutes of the meetings already give an account of all positions. On top of that, experience has taught us that with the publication of the edition results in conjunction with the search for a publishing house, publishers in the German-speaking world clearly give preference to German-language source texts over source texts in other languages – with the slight exception of English – for commercial reasons. Documents drawn up in Italian, French, or Dutch, on the other hand, in that sense constitute a “problem”.

3. Types of Sources and Application

The documents that will be used will therefore be predominantly in German, with a large portion also in English and a small portion in French. That is connected with the great transnational activity of the CDU and ÖVP which were active in the 1970s as opposition parties (and the intensification of their foreign policy engagement as compensation for their opposition role in their respective countries), with the growing significance of the English-language EDU and the diminishing influence of the MRP in France to the point of marginalization.

The selection and printing should include above all a selection of the most important meeting minutes on controversial topics and key events, motions for resolutions, communiqués, strategy papers, non-papers, and diary entries, as well as private documents.

4. Source Situation at the Karl von Vogelsang-Institut in Vienna

The Karl von Vogelsang-Institut maintains the national party archives of the ÖVP and consequently essential materials on the Europe policy and integration policy of the Christian Democratic political camp in Austria. In addition, the archives of the Secretary General of the EDU, which was located in Vienna, is also found in the archive holdings of the Karl von Vogelsang-Institut. International communications and cooperation with the EUCD and the EPP are therefore very well documented in the Institute's archives.

Added to this are documents, such as minutes, steering committees, correspondence, and meeting reports about the EDU. Relevant materials from estates and personal collections concern Fritz Bock, Josef Klaus, Hermann Withalm, Ludwig Steiner, Alfred Maleta, Andreas Khol, and Alois Mock.

5. Source Situation of the Archiv für Christlich-Demokratische Politik (ACDP) of the Konrad Adenauer-Stiftung in St. Augustin

The Archiv für Christlich-Demokratische Politik (the Archives for Christian-Democratic Policy, or ACDP) maintains the national party archives of the CDU and consequently essential materials on the Europe policy and integration policy of the Christian Democratic political camp in the Federal Republic of Germany. In terms of material, international communications and cooperation with the EUCD (minutes of meetings, party conventions, correspondence, and committees from 1965 on) as well as with the EPP group and the CDU/CSU group in the European Parliament (from 1970 on) are very well documented. Relevant materials from estates, private papers, or partial personal collections concern Fritz Burgbacher, Hans Furler, Wilhelm Hahn, Walter Hallstein, Kai-Uwe von Hassel, Bruno Heck, Fritz Hellwig, Kurt Georg Kiesinger, Egon Alfred Klepsch, Hermann Kopf, Hans-August Lückner, Günter Rinsche, and Helmut Kohl.

6. Source Situation of the Institut für Geschichte der Stiftung Universität Hildesheim

The Institut für Geschichte der Stiftung Universität Hildesheim has a separate archive and conference room that already contains copies that have been made of files from the

KADOC in Leuven, and thus fragments from the there at KADOC not yet organized materials from the estate of Leo Tindemans, as well as copies of materials that have already been researched from the collections of German chancellors Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt from the Archiv der sozialen Demokratie der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Bonn as well as materials on the policies of Bruno Kreisky from the Stiftung Bruno-Kreisky-Archiv (StBKA) in Vienna, which give important insides concerning “outsider views” of the EUCD, EDU and EPP from the point of view of party political critics and opponents.

III. Research Questions and Methodology

The planned editorial project is to fundamentally record hitherto unpublished documents. There is little sense in listing a catalog of questions that is all too large. The materials and a concise introduction (with a length of around fifty pages) should provide answers to the following five central question areas for the cited time period of study:

1. What contribution did Europe’s Christian Democrats and conservatives make to agenda setting, that is, to the thematic setting of priorities with regard to Europe policy and integration policy? Within that context, how far did targeted public relations go beyond the tight circle of party representatives and members, including with a view toward the electorate?
2. How important of a role within the agenda setting was played by global issues, and to what extent was there a connection or a relationship of tension there with regard to Europe policy and integration policy?
3. The 1970s were years of (failed) optimism, but also of crises and conflicts. What perceptions, assessments, and evaluations did these crises undergo in Christian Democratic and conservative party leadership circles in the Europe of the 1970s? What was the appreciation of the difficulties that developed, and what solutions to conflicts were offered by Europe’s Christian Democrats and conservatives?
4. What perceptions, assessments, and evaluations did the policies of the ideological opponents (the communists) or competitors (the socialists and social

democrats) undergo? What was the real role enjoyed in that respect by the oft-cited “big three” of Kreisky, Brandt, and Palme?

5. To what extent did Christian Democratic conservative transnational party cooperation make use of European institutions, committees, and bodies for lobbying work and network building (the Council of Europe, the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the European Councils)? Within the context of these questions, the archives of the Council of Europe as well as the accessible and relevant archives of special interest groups (the Federation of Austrian Industry and the Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund [the Austrian Trade Union Alliance]) which strove for direct international cooperation will of course be involved in the project.

V. Planned Ensuring of Results and Interim Conference

An international conference on the role of Christian Democratic and conservative parties in Europe 1965-1979 is to take place in the middle of the duration of the editorial project in 2010 or 2011 in Vienna in order for specialists to illuminate the specific domestic policy and national historical role of the parties. This has also proven to be very worthwhile with the previously mentioned editorial project.² The conference is to take place over two and a half days (a Thursday through Saturday afternoon) in Vienna.

VI. Planned Publications:

The edited papers from the conference will be published in both German and English in an anthology as well as a volume of documents (which will follow later). The goal is for a publication of the conference volume in the series of the Arbeitskreis Europäische Integration (AEI) of the Universität Innsbruck, which has been continued at the Institut für Geschichte der Stiftung Universität Hildesheim and has been published by Böhlau-Verlag. The publication location for the volume of documents is still open; one

² Michael Gehler, Wolfram Kaiser, and Helmut Wohnout (eds.), *Christdemokratie in Europa im 20. Jahrhundert/Christian Democracy in 20th Century Europe/La Démocratie Chrétienne en Europe au XXe siècle (Arbeitskreis Europäische Integration, Historische Forschungen, Veröffentlichungen 4)*, Vienna – Cologne – Weimar: 2001 (with the relevant literature).

possibility will once again be SAUR (Munich) or the publication series of the KADOC with outstanding references (KU Leuven Series).