



# Research Papers

**Robert Schuman:  
Principal Architect of the European Union**

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## Robert Schuman: Principal Architect of the European Union<sup>°</sup>

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*Abstract: A tangible proof of the meaning and scope of human flourishing that can change not only organizations but also entire societies, is given by Robert Schuman, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs who launched the Schuman Declaration (1950) that gave birth to the EU. His leitmotiv was to be a faithful instrument in the hands of God in whichever circumstances. A strong personal relationship with God characterized his entire personal and professional life and implied the heroic practice of virtues. He strove for peace on the continent and therefore for reconciliation between France and Germany - countries that had been archenemies since the Treaty of Verdun (843). He previewed a peace project on coal and steel, former instruments of war. Schuman pursued a policy of reconciliation from the moment he became a member of the French Parliament (1919) and even during his captivity during the Second World War. His coherence of life was acknowledged by friend and foe and recognized also professionally. His profound Catholic faith brought human flourishing that changed not only French-German relationships, not only Europe, but the entire world. Schuman's Europe would strive towards political unification through economic cooperation – as a means! – at the service of man and his transcendence so that man could flourish. These days man seems to be an instrument of the economy and politics instead of the other way round. A good moment to revive the person and thoughts of the Father of Europe.*

*Summary: Introduction – Robert Schuman (1886-1963) – European citizen from Franco-German conflictive border region – Policy of reconciliation – Daily and professional life – Thoughts on democracy – The Schuman declaration – Personal flourishing in Schuman and the goal of European unification – Schuman's catholic faith and its influence on politics – Man and his transcendence,*

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## INTRODUCTION

Distrust and anxiety are sentiments that are widely spread among European citizens these days. Eurosceptics and Europhiles are fighting for their right and control over European Union (EU) politics and economics.<sup>1</sup> To have more or less of the EU is currently a central topic of debate. At first glance, the economic crisis seems to be the cause and reason of this EU turmoil. The people who suffer from the crisis, or from its (in)direct consequences such as immigration, usually fall under the category of Eurosceptics. Those who do not suffer from the crisis, but instead benefit from the internal market, mostly belong in the realm of Europhiles.<sup>2</sup> According to the Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force in 2009, EU politics are led ever more by the national interests of the Member States.<sup>3</sup> The result is nevertheless a deeper European unification in crucial areas, such as the banking and budgeting sectors, due to economic interests across borders.<sup>4</sup> In this state of European confusion, which concerns integration and the ways of handling EU-related problems, a reflection on the Father of Europe, Robert Schuman, and his initial thoughts on European unification, can be beneficial to understanding the causes of European problems other than the above mentioned economic crisis. Moreover, they can also aid in finding a way out of these problems and contribute to a renewed positive form of integration. Schuman's ideas brought forth the birth of European unification with the Schuman Declaration on May 9, 1950, at a time when Europe was still suffering from the consequences of the Second World War, from the threat of Communism and from the fear of Germany provoking a third World War. Schuman's initiative

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<sup>1</sup> Aalbers, Chris, *Kunnen burgers Europa van koers laten veranderen?* (Delft: Uitgeverij Eburon, 2014), 7-14, 59.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 15-16. See also: Leonard, Mark, *Why Europe Will Run the 21-st Century* (London: Fourth Estate, Division of Harper Collins Publishers, 2011).

<sup>3</sup> "Protocol n. 1 on the Role of National Parliaments in the European Union", *Official Journal of the European Union*.

<sup>4</sup> European Commission - MEMO/14/57, 24/01/2014.

brought with it the longest period of peace among the EU-Member States since the Treaty of Verdun in 843.

Schuman was the principal architect<sup>5</sup> of European unification. For this reason, while studying the current problems of the EU, it is also worthwhile to learn more about Schuman himself, the reason he pursued European unification, and the way in which he envisioned the integration. This article will also aim at showing that Schuman's Catholic faith was his main source of inspiration for European unification<sup>6</sup> and that it provided him with his frame of reference for European unification and indirectly for international politics. It will then clarify that the European unification which Schuman conceived was one that would be at the service of the European citizen's personal development and transcendence<sup>7</sup> so as to contribute to the citizen's personal flourishing and therefore to the improvement of society. Schuman's own personal flourishing came forth from his desire to correspond to the personal vocation God gave him. The latter found its political expression in the way he saw, worked towards, and realized the fundamental structure and first steps of European unification.

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<sup>5</sup> Schuman's role as principal architect of the European unification project is explained in my thesis *Schuman's Europe. His Frame of Reference* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2012). This article is based on my thesis and many of the references will refer to data I retrieved from the Schuman Archives of the *Maison de Robert Schuman* in Scy-Chazelles, the Archives of the *Département de la Moselle* in Metz, and from many more documents, books, interviews, conferences and other materials that I collected and studied for my PhD thesis on *Schuman's Europe. His Frame of Reference* mentioned above. Its translation into French *L'Europe de Schuman. Ses racines* was published on 4 September 2013, at the occasion of his 50 death anniversary. (Metz: Éditions des Paraiges, 2013).

<sup>6</sup> This does not mean that the European unification project was a Catholic project. Schuman himself made this clear as well. The "Vatican Europe" is a myth." Fimister, 227; *Le Catholicisme en face du problème de l'unification de l'Europe*, Paris, November 1954. Archives Départementales de la Moselle, 43J31. See also: Roth, 330. See also: Krijtenburg, "Robert Schuman's Commitment to European Unification, the Inspiring Role of his Roman Catholic Faith", in *Philosophia Reformata*, vol. 80(1), (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

<sup>7</sup> Transcendence refers to the universal principles embedded in natural law as reflected in those days in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). Schuman was convinced that every man was called to be an instrument of Providence and had a vocation by God.

This article will begin with an introduction on Schuman and will describe his background and the way it possibly influenced his thoughts on European integration. This will be followed with a more detailed consideration of how the Catholic faith explains not only Schuman's personal flourishing, but also to a large extent his reasons for, and the way in which, he envisioned the European unification to take place. Some of the main consequences, concepts, and principles, which this input of faith brought about, such as the pivotal role of man in the integration process, will be studied more closely. The article will conclude with an epilogue on how personal flourishing can contribute to upright European unification and vice versa.

### **ROBERT SCHUMAN (1886-1963)**

Robert Schuman, who is not well known to the majority of people<sup>8</sup>, is the person who laid the first stone of a unique integration project. His vision of European political integration was and is known for being unique in European history and in the history of the world. With the Schuman Declaration, he helped to achieve the first peaceful revolution on the European continent.

Schuman's Catholic but also regional background – he considered himself to be from the conflictive border region of Alsace-Lorraine – had a strong impact on his life and views of European unification, and this will be examined more in depth in the following part. Political circumstances made it possible for him to put his ideas into effect.

#### **EUROPEAN CITIZEN FROM FRANCO-GERMAN CONFLICTIVE BORDER REGION**

Schuman was born in Luxembourg on June 27, 1886. His father was from Lorraine, a region northeast of France that had become German after the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71. His mother was from Luxembourg but obtained German nationality.

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<sup>8</sup> This observation is based on the negative responses to my question on the knowledge of Robert Schuman. A large majority of people has never heard of him. Some of them refer to Robert Schumann (double "n"), the German composer, others to Schumacher, the Formule-1 car-racer, but hardly ever to the main architect of the EU.

Schuman was thus born a German, but considered himself to be more a citizen of Lorraine like his father than a German citizen.

Living his childhood in Luxembourg, he became familiar with the Luxembourgian, Belgian, German and French mentalities and cultures that imbued the country. He was trilingual and spoke German, French and Luxembourgian fluently. One might even assume that he experienced in this way a cultural European unification at a micro-level during his childhood.

Schuman did his *Abitur* (final year of highschool) in Strasbourg and studied German Civil Law in Bonn, Munich and Berlin and obtained his PhD in Strasbourg. He had become a member of the Catholic Student Union *Unitas*, which had Thomas Aquinas as its Patron Saint and lived by the motto “*In necessariis unitas, in dubio libertas, in omnibus caritas*” (unity in necessary things; liberty when there is doubt; charity in all things). As will be seen in this article, this motto and more of Aquinas’ philosophical and theological observations – such as those regarding peace, reconciliation, subsidiarity, and solidarity – are reflected in the Social Doctrine of the Church and, consequently, in Schuman’s thoughts<sup>9</sup> on European integration.

#### POLICY OF RECONCILIATION

Since his youth, Schuman’s goal in life was to find a solution to the seemingly everlasting problem of enmity between what are today known as the countries of

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<sup>9</sup> Thomas Aquinas (1225 – 1274) was a philosopher and theologian who was strongly recommended by Pope Leo XIII (1810 – 1903) in his encyclical *Aeterni Patris* of 1879 for providing deep philosophical insights on which “a right interpretation of the other sciences in great part depends” (Leo XIII, Encyclical letter *Aeterni Patris*, Rome 1879, n. 1). Aquinas’s thoughts on subsidiarity find their echo in the famous Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* by Pope Leo XIII of 1891 and more elaborated by Pope Pius XI in his Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* of 1931, and equally so – and because of that – in Schuman’s thoughts about the way the European integration should take place. Through his study of Thomism, Schuman consolidated his own philosophy of nature, man and morality and their synthesis. He highly appreciated Aquinas’s dialectic instrument, a method for a thorough analysis of reality that is able to distinguish contrastive elements and to subsequently bring them together through the dialectic of conciliation and reconciliation. This way of thinking perfectly suited Schuman’s constant striving for peace and harmony amongst peoples and nations. See: George H. Sabine and Thomas L. Thorson, *A History of Political Theory*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (Hinsdale, IL: Dryden Press, 1973), 236, 237. See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman’s Europe*, 40 – 43.

Germany and France. From the Treaty of Verdun in 843 until 1945, there were constantly wars on the European continent. Alsace-Lorraine, a conflictive border region, was almost always involved in those wars precisely because of its rich natural resources such as coal and steel, materials that were of much use to the weapons industry. Even when he was still a student, Schuman acknowledged that the only way to attain peace would be through a policy of reconciliation between those archenemies, Germany and France.

Alsace-Lorraine returned to France after the First World War in 1918. In 1919 Schuman was chosen to be the representative of the *Département de la Moselle* (Moselle Department) in the French Parliament. He thus started his policy of reconciliation also on the national political level and continued to do so even through the Second World War and even while he was imprisoned as first parliamentarian by the Gestapo as will be explained more in detail later in this article. After the Second World War, he strove towards Franco-German reconciliation as Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs in France. During that time, the Schuman Declaration was proposed on 9 May 1950.

#### DAILY AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

The way in which Schuman lived out his faith, the ethics that come with the Catholic faith, and the way in which he fulfilled his duties as a member of Parliament and later when he was a Minister in different cabinets and even Prime Minister, show an astounding integrity of life. Schuman put his faith into practice in all circumstances of his daily and professional life.<sup>10</sup> In the words of his compatriot, the philosopher Jacques Maritain, it can be said that Schuman sanctified the secular<sup>11</sup>. His life was, in

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<sup>10</sup> See also Guy Villarós in François-Xavier de Guibert (red.), *Robert Schuman, homme d'état, citoyen du Ciel*, (Paris : Office d'Édition Impression Librairie, 2006), 103-120. "[...] il n'y a pas chez lui deux éthiques: une éthique de conviction, le dimanche à la messe, et une éthique de responsabilité toute différente pour la semaine et ses occupations ministérielles. Il justifie la proposition de Max Weber: "l'éthique de la conviction et l'éthique de la responsabilité ne sont pas contradictoires, mais elles se complètent l'une l'autre et constituent ensemble *l'homme authentique*, c'est-à-dire un homme qui peut prétendre à la "vocation politique" (Raymond Poidevin, *Robert Schuman*, (Paris: Beauchesne, 1988), 239)."

<sup>11</sup> Jacques Maritain, *Humanisme intégral* (Paris: Aubier Ed. Montaigne, 1968), 130. "La prise de conscience de l'office temporel du chrétien appelle un style nouveau de sainteté, qu'on peut

a certain sense, a living proof of Maritain's belief that religion enhances philosophy, taking it to levels it would otherwise be denied. According to Maritain, it is faith that sheds light on reason, making it possible to see what otherwise would be difficult to see,<sup>12</sup> and this can also be applied in the field of politics. Schuman's personality as a politician, at least in testimonies such as that of André Philip (1902–1970), one of Schuman's colleagues, seems to underline this thought. Philip was impressed by Schuman's sincere faith and the way it permeated all his actions. He observed that Schuman's personality was guided by his Catholic faith, expressed in the modest but clear way in which he acted and reacted, and in the motto he lived by that he had only come to serve. He was, according to Philip, always respectful towards people and true to the inner vocation that gave sense to his life:

What first struck me about him was how his interior life shone forth; he was, it seemed to me, a dedicated man without personal desires, without ambition, of a total sincerity and intellectual honesty, who only sought to serve where he felt the call to serve. By tradition he was conservative, hostile to innovations, by temperament he was peaceful, shy and hesitant. Often he hedged, delayed his decision, tried to finesse with the call he felt in the depth of his conscience. Then, when there was nothing else to do and he was sure of what his interior voice was demanding of him, he would brusquely take the most courageous initiatives and push them to their logical conclusion, unmoved by critics, attacks or threats.<sup>13</sup>

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caractériser avant tout comme la sainteté et la sanctification de la vie profane.” It is reminiscent of Schuman's friend Eschbach's advice to Schuman to become a ‘saint in suit’ and follow his professional career.

<sup>12</sup> See: Leo XIII, Encyclical letter *Rerum Novarum* (1891) in which Leo XIII renewed the condemnations of Rationalism for its theory that reason is the primary source of knowledge and of spiritual truth. The Pope pursued the reestablishment of the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas which made clear that faith shed light on reason and that reason could never be contradictory to faith. See also: Jacques Maritain, *An Introduction to Philosophy* (Wiltshire, UK: Anthony Rowe, 1930). See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman's Europe*, 138.

<sup>13</sup> André Philip in René Lejeune, *Père de l'Europe*, (Paris: Fayard, 2000), Preface. André Philip was a Professor in Politics, Commissioner of the French Committee of National Liberation and later of General De Gaulle's provisional government in London and Algiers, socialist Deputy of the Rhône and Minister of Finance and of National Economy. He was a Protestant and knew Schuman well. “J’ai connu Robert Schuman pendant une quinzaine d’années au Parlement, au gouvernement, puis au Mouvement européen. Ce qui m’a d’abord frappé en lui, c’était le rayonnement de sa vie intérieure. On était devant un homme consacré, sans désires personnels, sans ambition, d’une totale



An observation that might be of interest in this context, which shows Schuman's secular and conscientious upright behavior, is his belief that an authentic secular society is not an "integralist"<sup>14</sup> secular society which imposes its secularity and prohibits religious thought. Rather, a secular society, should not be anti-Christian, and can be perfectly in accordance with a democratic government. Schuman himself regards even democracy as a product of Christian faith:

Democracy owes its existence to Christianity. It was born the day man was required to set the best example, during his life on earth [i.e. by respecting human dignity, individual rights and freedom and by exercising brotherly love towards his neighbour]. Before Christ, ideas such as this had never been expressed.<sup>15</sup>

#### THOUGHTS ON DEMOCRACY

Schuman's thoughts on democracy illustrate the influence of his main source of inspiration, the Christian faith. Schuman regarded democracy as essentially Christian, as it was based on the typically Christian element of the equality of men,

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sincérité et humilité intellectuelle qui ne cherchait qu'à servir, là et au moment où il se sentait appelé. Par tradition, il était conservateur, hostile aux innovations; par tempérament, il était pacifique, timide et hésitant. Souvent il a louvoyé, retardé la décision, essayé de ruser avec l'appel qui se faisait entendre au fond de sa conscience; puis quand il n'y avait plus rien à faire, qu'il était sûr de ce qu'exigeait de lui sa voix intérieure, il prenait brusquement les initiatives les plus hardes et les poussait jusqu'au bout, insensible aux critiques, aux attaques, aux menaces." "Dans l'atmosphère enfiévrée des débats parlementaires, il était rafraîchissant de rencontrer un homme toujours prêt à engager le dialogue, cherchant à persuader, tenant compte des objections, toujours avec le même calme et une entière courtoisie. Pour atteindre son but, même le plus important, il n'a jamais employé un moyen vulgaire, exagéré le poids d'un argument, ni élevé la voix. Mais par-dessus tout, il restera dans la mémoire de ceux qui l'ont connu comme le type du vrai démocrate, imaginatif et créateur, combatif dans sa douceur, toujours respectueux de l'homme, fidèle à une vocation intime qui donnait le sens à la vie." See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman's Europe*, 54-55.

<sup>14</sup> 'Integralist' laicization is a secularity that informs all fields, takes their religious elements out and fosters an anti-religious society. See M. Rhonheimer, *Cristianismo y laicidad. Historia y actualidad de una relación compleja*, (Madrid: Rialp, 2009). See also: Krijtenburg, "Robert Schuman's Commitment to European Unification, the Inspiring Role of his Roman Catholic Faith", in *Philosophia Reformata*, vol. 80(1), (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

<sup>15</sup> Schuman, *For Europe*, 43-45; Schuman, *Pour l'Europe*, 52-54. "La démocratie doit son existence au christianisme. Elle est née le jour où l'homme a été appelé à réaliser dans sa vie temporelle la dignité de la personne humaine, dans la liberté individuelle, dans le respect des droits de chacun et par la pratique de l'amour fraternel à l'égard de tous. Jamais avant le Christ pareilles idées n'avaient été formulées. La démocratie est ainsi liée au christianisme, doctrinalement et chronologiquement." See also: Remi Brague, *Eccentric Culture: A Theory of Western Civilization* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's Press) 2002.

including equal rights before the law. According to Schuman, an anti-Christian democracy, which is a democracy that does not respect the equality of men, would be a caricature of democracy that would inevitably develop into a tyranny or anarchy. Schuman sees Europe as the place where democracy should find its total development, precisely because it is the continent in which Christianity forms a pivotal part of cultural heritage.<sup>16</sup>

At the same time, Schuman insists that Christianity is not and must not be integrated into a political system and therefore that it not be identified with any form of government, however democratic it might be. He stresses the importance of separation of Church and State affairs in this regard, saying:

We must distinguish what belongs to Caesar and what belongs to God. Each of these powers has its own responsibilities. The Church has to make sure that natural laws and truths are respected: however, it should not become the judge of concrete choices which have to be made from a practical point of view in line with the opportunities of the moment or that arise due to psychological and historical developments. The responsible politician's task consists in reconciling these two ideas: the spiritual and the secular: Our lives often become confused because of the problems we face and the choices we have to make, especially in the passion of controversy. However, no conflict involving these two requirements is insolvable, since one is an immutable doctrine of principles and the other implies wise administration of changing situations that have to be considered in the lives of populations and individuals.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Schuman, *Pour l'Europe*, 66. "La mise en oeuvre de ce vaste programme d'une démocratie généralisée dans le sens chrétien du mot trouve son épanouissement dans la construction de l'Europe." See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman's Europe*, 227, note 428.

<sup>17</sup> Schuman, *For Europe*, 46-47. Schuman, *Pour l'Europe*, 55-56. "Il faut distinguer le domaine de César et celui de Dieu. Ces deux pouvoirs ont chacun des responsabilités propres. L'Eglise doit veiller au respect de la loi naturelle et des vérités révélées; son rôle, par contre, n'est pas de se faire juge des choix concrets qui devront se faire selon des points de vue pratique d'opportunité et selon les possibilités de fait qui découlent de l'évolution psychologique et historique. La tâche de l'homme politique responsable consiste à concilier, dans une synthèse parfois délicate mais nécessaire, ces deux ordres de considération, le spirituel et le profane. Notre vie est souvent obscurcie dans le dédale des problèmes et des options à faire et dans la passion des controverses. Mais il n'y a aucun conflit insoluble entre les deux impératifs, celui d'une doctrine immuable en ce qui concerne les

Schuman thus explains that the separation of Church and State consists of their different tasks and that the two should complement each other. The task of the Church is to hold a moral mirror to the state. The task of the State is to take that mirror into account and subsequently to make its decisions. The Church, as a ‘moral guard,’ has an independent position and is therefore not influenced by majorities or minorities. This also implies that the Church can neither appropriate the tasks of the state nor impose its influence.

#### THE SCHUMAN DECLARATION

As mentioned at the beginning of this article, the Declaration was a unique act that brought forth a distinctive kind of integration; historically, a similar unification process had never been attempted. This Declaration not only necessitated reconciliation between the two archenemies, but it also handed over part of national sovereignty to a supranational entity. This was done in the field of coal and steel, turning instruments of war into instruments of peace. Their common interests were safeguarded by the supranational High Authority, the current European Commission, so that war, using Schuman’s words, would not only become “unthinkable, but also impossible”<sup>18</sup>. The result has been 65 years of peace among EU Member states. The Schuman Declaration in 1950 brought the longest period of peace that Europe has ever seen, leading the EU to receive the Nobel Peace Prize in December 2012.

#### PERSONAL FLOURISHING IN SCHUMAN AND THE GOAL OF EUROPEAN UNIFICATION

The article will now begin to focus on how the Catholic faith influenced Schuman as a person and his dream of European unification. It explains the reasons he aspired for it and the way the unification had to take place in order to be achieved. The congruence between his faith and the way he put it into practice, in his political thoughts and deeds, will be particularly examined. Some subjects were already

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principes et celui d’une sage application des contingences changeantes dont il faut tenir compte dans la vie des peuples comme dans celle des individus.” See: *Holy Scripture*, Mt. 22.21. See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman’s Europe*, 227, 228, note 429.

<sup>18</sup> Schuman, Schuman Declaration, 9 May 1950.

touched upon in the first section but merit a closer look. This section will show both Schuman's goal of achieving European unification, which for him meant the personal flourishing of its citizens and his own personal flourishing, by giving heed to his personal vocation.

Robert Schuman was a man of Catholic faith<sup>19</sup> and this imbued his entire being and therefore also his way of thinking about European unification. It made him envision the principles and concepts that should lead the integration process in which man with his transcendence occupies the pivotal role. Politically his faith first transmitted itself in his reconciliation policy when he entered the French Parliament in 1919. This intent was achieved more than 30 years later in the Schuman Declaration of 1950. His faith led to his personal flourishing, and made him well known by friend and foe for his integrity of life in all aspects, both professionally and in daily life. Schuman firmly believed in each human being's personal vocation to sanctity.<sup>20</sup> Interestingly enough, his process of beatification began in 2004. Schuman's conviction and *leitmotiv* in life was:

We're all instruments, however imperfect, of a Providence who uses them to accomplish grand designs which surpass us. This certainty obliges us to a great deal of modesty but also confers on us a serenity that our own personal experiences would not justify if we consider them from a purely human point of view.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Poidevin, *Robert Schuman*, 16 -26; René Lejeune, *Robert Schuman, Père de l'Europe* (Paris: Fayard, 2000), 37, 38, 51-58, 211; Alan P. Fimister, *Robert Schuman: Neo-Scholastic Humanism and the Reunification of Europe*, (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2008), 224 -227; Pennera, 175 – 214; *Robert Schuman 1886-1963. Et les débuts de l'Europe*, (Milano: Silvana Editoriale, 2009), 30-38. Archives *Maison de Robert Schuman*, RS 11-14, Archives Départementales de la Moselle, 19J688. See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman's Europe* 34.

<sup>20</sup> The universal call to sanctity - proper to Catholic faith, Mt. 5,48, I Peter 1:15, - is, like the sanctification of daily work, also the essential message of the Personal Prelature of the Opus Dei, which was founded in 1928 by Saint Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer and was judicially erected as Personal Prelature by Saint John Paul II in 1983. The call to holiness for lay people was a key concept of the Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, ch. 5.

<sup>21</sup> Robert Schuman wrote these lines in a letter (1942) to Robert Rochefort, colleague and biographer, See: François Roth, *Robert Schuman* (Paris: Fayard, 2008), 562. See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman's Europe*, 9, note 2.

A crucial moment in Schuman's life, illustrating his decisiveness to heroically follow the path of faith in ordinary life, occurred when his mother died in an accident in 1911. He was 25 years old at the time. His father had already passed away when he was a teenager, but because his relationship with his mother, who was a devout Catholic, was much stronger, he was even more deeply impacted by her death.

When she died, Schuman had a moment of doubt regarding his vocation in life, a crisis concerning whether he should enter the priesthood or continue as a lawyer. A friend of his, Henri Eschbach, who knew him well, advised him to continue as a lay person, adding that "the saints of the future will be saints in suit (*"saints en veston"*)".<sup>22</sup> According to Eschbach, the right thing for Schuman to do was to help change the world from within and to make it a better place; in the end, it would suit him perfectly. "I cannot imagine a better apostle than you [...] you should remain a lay person because you will then succeed better in doing good, which is your sole preoccupation."<sup>23</sup>

It was then that Schuman firmly decided to give heed to his call to sanctity as a layman in the middle of the world through his professional and daily life. This also made him decide eight years later to accept his election as selected candidate for the French Parliament, although he had never aspired to become a politician. He was chosen by the people to be their representative in the French Parliament,

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<sup>22</sup> See also footnote 5. The universal call to holiness for the laity was put in writing in the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* in 1964 by Pope Paul VI. It says a.o. "All the faithful of Christ of whatever rank or status, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity; (4\*) by this holiness as such a more human manner of living is promoted in this earthly society. In order that the faithful may reach this perfection, they must use their strength accordingly as they have received it, as a gift from Christ. They must follow in His footsteps and conform themselves to His image seeking the will of the Father in all things. They must devote themselves with all their being to the glory of God and the service of their neighbor". It is also the central message of the Personal Prelature Opus Dei that started in 1928.

<sup>23</sup> Eschbach in: Christian Pennera, *Robert Schuman: la jeunesse et les débuts politiques d'un grand européen de 1886 à 1924* (Sarreguemines: Pierron, 1985), 31; Raymond Poidevin, *Robert Schuman, homme d'état 1886 - 1963* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1986), 16; Alan P. Fimister, *Robert Schuman: Neo-Scholastic Humanism and the Reunification of Europe* (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2008), 148 ; Archives départementales de la Moselle 34 J1. Henri Eschbach in Poidevin 1986: "Je ne puis imaginer meilleur apôtre que toi; tu resteras laïque parce que tu réussiras mieux à faire le bien, ce qui est ton unique préoccupation." See also: Krijtenburg, Schuman's Europe, 27, note 40.

because he was a trustful and well-qualified person who would be able to defend their interests in a proper way.

#### SCHUMAN'S CATHOLIC FAITH AND ITS INFLUENCE ON POLITICS

Schuman's faith explained not only the heroic way in which he lived the virtues, but also his acknowledgement of the fact that core values and principles ought to be put into practice in politics for the acquisition of peace and proper political unification. He focused on the pivotal role of man and his transcendence, which led to forgiveness and reconciliation, effective solidarity, subsidiarity and supranationality. These, and other core values and principles, such as justice, human rights<sup>24</sup>, and rule of law, left their fundamental and foundational prints in his regional, national, European and international politics.<sup>25</sup>

Such values and principles explain not only the acquisition of peace on the European continent, but also Schuman's view regarding how society should be constructed so as to acquire this peace and the way in which peace was to be achieved.

Before commenting on the application of some of these values and principles in politics, exclusive attention needs to be given to why Schuman stressed the profound importance and real reason for European unification. Schuman's faith also explains that he – and with him Adenauer, the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, and Alcide de Gasperi, the Prime Minister of Italy – saw the spiritual and cultural heritage of Europe as the primary *raison d'être* of European unification. This

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<sup>24</sup> The content of the universal principles, such as human rights, needs to be placed in the context of the first half of the twentieth century. Its echo was found in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights of 1948. (Navarro Valls, Conference on human dignity, Moergestel, The Netherlands, 2009).

<sup>25</sup> Schuman's way of thinking about the main principles to be practiced in politics reflect his thorough knowledge of (neo) thomism and of the Social Doctrine of the Church. Regarding the principle of subsidiarity this would mean in Catholic Social thought that it applies not simply to 'political' institutions and relationships – such as these days the relationship between the European Union and its Member States – but also to the many other 'social' institutions and associations which constitute the 'pluriform' nature of human community. In: Nicholas Aroney, "Subsidiarity, Federalism and the best Constitution: Thomas Aquinas on City, Province and Empire" in: *Law and Philosophy* (Springer 2007), 26. As such, Catholic social theory presupposes 'an organically pluralistic society of hierarchically ordered communities': Joan Lockwood O'Donovan, "Subsidiarity and Political Authority in Theological Perspective", in Oliver O'Donovan and Joan Lockwood O'Donovan (eds.), *Bonds of Imperfection: Christian Politics, Past and Present* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), p. 228.

was the real reason for unification, rather than the threat of communism, of a third World War or of the need to work together because of the Marshall Aid<sup>26</sup>, as is often believed, although these additional factors did facilitate the need for unity. The heritage he spoke of included the Greek-Roman tradition and the Judeo-Christian roots of European civilization which, among other roots, formed the base of the educational, sanitation and legal systems in Europe.

The European spirit that came forth from this heritage was, according to Schuman, the soul of the European integration process. He believed that without it the whole project would be endangered:

We are still at the start of things. We would do well to bridle our impatience. If not, we are likely to make the doubters more distrustful and what is more serious, endanger not only the experiment but also the whole idea of a united Europe.<sup>27</sup>

He therefore stressed the need to integrate step by step, such as first in the field of coal and steel, which would change those “instruments of war” into “instruments of peace”, and to have the people get used to this change, before the next step were taken. He emphasized to integrate never more than necessary. He himself gave the example far before the Schuman Declaration when he came up with the “Lex Schuman” which adapted the regional laws of Alsace-Lorraine to national laws only as far as needed and to mutual content. Schuman, however, equally underlined the need to never forget about and care for this European common soul while fostering the common European spirit, of which he says:

The European spirit signifies being conscious of belonging to a cultural family and to have a willingness to serve that community in the spirit of total mutuality, without any hidden motives of hegemony or the selfish exploitation of others.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> The Marshall financial Aid (1948), was provided by the United States to help rebuild European economies and come to a strong Europe. Europe would thus be protected against the threat of Communism and possibly turn into a trade-partner for the United States.

<sup>27</sup> Schuman speech at the Council of Europe, 1949. See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman's Europe*, 52, note 111.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman's Europe*, 52, note 112.

He warned of the danger of focusing primarily on the “secondary” results or means of unification, saying that:

This ‘whole’ cannot and must not remain an economic and technical enterprise: it needs a soul, the conscience of its historical affinities and of its responsibilities, in the present and in the future, and a political will at the service of the same human ideal.<sup>29</sup>

These thoughts, with the help of Jean Monnet, the head of the French Planning Commission, led to the Schuman Declaration.<sup>30</sup> It implicitly and explicitly contained the previously mentioned core values and principles, i.e. the pivotal role of man and his transcendence, forgiveness and reconciliation, effective solidarity, subsidiarity and supranationality.

These are precisely the concepts that because they were not taken care of properly, caused the European turmoil mentioned at the beginning of this article.

#### MAN AND HIS TRANSCENDENCE, EFFECTIVE SOLIDARITY, SUPRANATIONALITY

Schuman regarded man with his transcendence as the one who had to play the pivotal role in society and therefore in politics<sup>31</sup> and economics<sup>32</sup>. This was, and still is, fully consistent with the Social Doctrine of the Church.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Robert Schuman, *For Europe* (Geneva: Les Éditions Nagel, 2010), 58; Robert Schuman, *Pour l'Europe*, (Geneva: Les Éditions Nagel, 2005), 66. “Et cet ensemble ne pourra et ne devra pas rester une entreprise économique et technique: il lui faut une âme, la conscience de ses affinités historiques et de ses responsabilités présents et futures, une volonté politique au service d'un même idéal humain.” The definition of ‘soul’ given by the Catholic Church in those days, and thus known to Schuman, was written in the Catechism of Pope St. Pius X, Rome 1908 (and shortened version in 1930), Article I, n. 29. “The soul is the noblest part of man, because it is a spiritual substance, endowed with intelligence and will, capable of knowing God and of possessing Him for all eternity.” See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman's Europe*, 165, note 415.

<sup>30</sup> In my thesis *Schuman's Europe. His Frame of Reference*, I explain why Monnet, who is often incorrectly regarded as the intellectual father of the Schuman Declaration, is no more, and no less, than the person who put Schuman's ideas into writing and therefore, next to Adenauer and De Gasperi, an important Founding Father.

<sup>31</sup> Translated into today's Social Doctrine of the Church, see: *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005) n. 384: “*The human person is the foundation and purpose of political life*. Endowed with a rational nature, the human person is responsible for his own choices and able to pursue projects that give meaning to life at the individual and social level. Being open both to the Transcendent and to others is his characteristic and distinguishing trait. Only in relation to the Transcendent and to others does the human person



Schuman saw each and every person as an instrument in the hands of Providence, which has grand designs for men and women. Schuman acknowledged, as mentioned before, the Catholic conviction that each person is called by God to become a saint (see note 19). Politics and the economy needed to be the means of helping man to grow and develop. Proper to this concept of man is that it goes beyond frontiers and implies effective solidarity within and beyond borders so as to facilitate mutual growth in sanctity.<sup>34</sup>

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reach the total and complete fulfillment of himself. This means that for the human person, a naturally social and political being, “social life is not something added on” but is part of an essential and indelible dimension.”

<sup>32</sup> Translated into today’s Social Doctrine of the Church, see: *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 334. “The economy has as its object the development of wealth and its progressive increase, not only in quantity but also in quality; this is morally correct if it is directed to man's overall development in solidarity and to that of the society in which people live and work. Development, in fact, cannot be reduced to a mere process of accumulating goods and services. On the contrary, accumulation by itself, even were it for the common good, is not a sufficient condition for bringing about authentic human happiness. In this sense, the Church's social Magisterium warns against the treachery hidden within a development that is only quantitative, for the “excessive availability of every kind of material goods for the benefit of certain social groups, easily makes people slaves of ‘possession’ and of immediate gratification ... This is the so-called civilization of ‘consumption’ or ‘consumerism’.”

<sup>33</sup> Cfr. Pope John Paul II (1920 – 2005), Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici*, (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998) 17 “The vocation of the lay faithful to holiness implies that life according to the Spirit expresses itself in a particular way in their *involvement in temporal affairs* and in their *participation in earthly activities*. Once again the apostle admonishes us: “Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (*Col 3:17*). Applying the apostle's words to the lay faithful, the Council categorically affirms: “Neither family concerns nor other secular affairs should be excluded from their religious programme of life”(45). Likewise the Synod Fathers have said: “The unity of life of the lay faithful is of the greatest importance: indeed they must be sanctified in everyday professional and social life. Therefore, to respond to their vocation, the lay faithful must see their daily activities as an occasion to join themselves to God, fulfill his will, serve other people and lead them to communion with God in Christ”(46).”

<sup>34</sup> See also: Pope Pius XII, Encyclical letter *Summi Pontificatus*, 42, 43. Castelgandolfo, 20 October 1939. 42. “In the light of this unity of all mankind, which exists in law and in fact, individuals do not feel themselves isolated units, like grains of sand, but united by the very force of their nature and by their internal destiny, into an organic, harmonious mutual relationship which varies with the changing of times.” 43. “And the nations, despite a difference of development due to diverse conditions of life and of culture, are not destined to break the unity of the human race, but rather to enrich and embellish it by the sharing of their own peculiar gifts and by that reciprocal interchange of goods which can be possible and efficacious only when a mutual love and a lively sense of charity unite all the sons of the same Father and all those redeemed by the same Divine Blood.” See also: Pope Paul VI, Vaticanum II, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 12 (Rome: 1965). “For by his

Effective solidarity signifies following Schuman's line of thought, a solidarity expressed through concrete deeds of integration that contribute immediately or in the long run to the benefit of all peoples and states concerned. This implied that supranationality be put into effect only when needed for common European interests. This also meant that national interests needed to be safeguarded as long as they did not contradict common European interests. The step-by-step method of integration<sup>35</sup> referred to a slow pace of integration. This pace should be in accordance with the human psyche so as not to accelerate the integration process imprudently, as this would have a counterproductive effect on the citizens. Schuman desired these aspects to be consistent with the Christian moral order. They needed to take into account the moral mirror that Christianity upholds. This means, when such a vision is translated into contemporary society and its politics and economics, that the integration need always be primarily at the service of the citizen and not the other way around, and that a supranational institution should take care to safeguard no more than the necessary common interests. Everything is meant to serve the flourishing of the person with his transcendence.<sup>36</sup>

#### FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION

Schuman strove to achieve reconciliation through a policy of forgiveness and reconciliation for the archenemies of Germany and France. As mentioned before, he practiced this policy from the moment he was chosen as a representative of the Alsace-Lorraine region in the French Parliament in 1919, after the First World War. It was a particularly special time as Schuman himself had just changed his

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innermost nature man is a social being, and unless he relates himself to others he can neither live nor develop his potential". See also: Schlag, Martin, *La dignità dell'uomo come principio sociale*, (Roma: EDUSC, 2013).

<sup>35</sup> Schuman, *Pour l'Europe*, 146, 153. Schuman in Schuman Declaration: "L'Europe ne se fera pas d'un coup, ni dans une construction d'ensemble: elle se fera par des réalisations concrètes, créant d'abord une solidarité de fait." See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman's Europe*, 111.

<sup>36</sup> It might be observed that currently man seems to have become more of an instrument of the economy and therefore of politics. This might well be the main reason why other aspects, such as reconciliation, effective solidarity and subsidiarity, are also exclusively regarded from the economic and political perspective. They therewith lack the *quid*, to which those concepts relate, which is human dignity including transcendence. The latter facilitates personal flourishing and fraternity and therefore reconciliation, solidarity and subsidiarity among peoples and States. See also: Schlag, Martin, *La dignità dell'uomo come principio sociale*, (Roma: EDUSC, 2013), 40.

nationality from German to French and the Treaty of Versailles had just recently been concluded.

He continued this policy of reconciliation at the beginning of the Second World War and even after his captivity by the Gestapo as mentioned before. He was put in prison and later under house arrest in Neustadt (Pfalz). Even in 1942, after escaping to France and searched for by the Germans for a large amount of money, he spoke about the need for reconciliation. After the war when he occupied several Ministerial posts and became Prime Minister, he continued his policy of reconciliation, convinced that this was the only way to acquire peace. It comes as no surprise that this policy was vehemently opposed by many, in particular communists, nationalists and Gaullists.<sup>37</sup>

#### SUBSIDIARITY

Schuman's deep Catholic faith also explains the emphasis he gave to the Social Doctrine of the Church, as explained in the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* on the condition of workers by Pope Leo XIII in 1891. Due to its introduction of subsidiarity and solidarity for which he also referred to Aquinas's teachings, it can be considered one of the cornerstones of the Catholic social doctrine regarding sound politics<sup>38</sup>. The term subsidiarity was, however, explicitly mentioned and elaborated more in depth and for the first time in the encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno*, on the reconstruction of social order, by Pope Paul VI in 1931. An example of Schuman's

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<sup>37</sup> To indicate that "nothing has changed much" Sébastien Maillard mentions in his book *Qu'avons-nous fait de l'Europe?* (Paris: Éditions Salvator, 2013) that the former opponents and those in favour of his politics regarding sovereignty, supranationality etc. would be still the same. Communists, Gaullists, nationalists and a socialist party on the one hand and the liberals, the Christians Democrats and the Social-Democrats on the other hand.

"Rien n'a changé sous le soleil. Le transfert de compétences, le partage de souveraineté, un pouvoir supranational, provoquent toujours les mêmes débats, doutes et réserves. [...] Vous êtes la bête noire des communistes, des gaullistes, des nationalistes et d'une partie des socialistes. Vos alliés sont les libéraux, les démocrates-chrétiens et les sociaux-démocrates."

<sup>38</sup> Leo XIII, Encyclical letter *Rerum Novarum* (1891). The term subsidiarity is not mentioned explicitly, but its content is clearly reflected in this Encyclical together with the principle of solidarity, especially in nn. 33, 34. See also Pius XI, Encyclical letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), n. 80. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, IIa-IIae, q. lxi, ar. 1, ad 2m. Thomas Aquinas, *On the Governance of Rulers*, 1, 15 (*Opera omnia*, ed. Vives, Vol. 27, p. 356) quoted in: Leo XIII, Encyclical letter *Rerum Novarum* (1891), notes 27 + 28.

application of subsidiarity before the Schuman Declaration happened – as mentioned before - when, in 1919, as a lawyer, he had to adapt the laws of Alsace-Lorraine to those of the Central Administration of France characterized by *laïcité*. He came up with the then revolutionary *Lex Schuman*, “Schuman’s law”, in which regional interests, such as the social laws introduced by Bismarck after conquering Alsace-Lorraine in 1871 and religious education, including that in public schools, were safeguarded. Researcher David Price comments thus:

[The Lex Schuman] was called ‘the greatest act of legal unification attempted to then and, moreover, accomplished with the approval of the populations concerned.’ The key principles were later applied in the Convention of Human Rights and the European Community.<sup>39</sup>

Schuman thus put into practice Thomas Aquinas’ principle of subsidiarity to which Pope Leo XIII’s encyclical *Rerum Novarum* referred. He did so later on as well when dealing with European integration. He believed that what could be done on an exclusively local, regional, national and European level, should be done at that appropriate level.<sup>40</sup>

Henri Brugmans, President of the College of Europe in Bruges and a friend of Schuman, offers an illustrative testimony in this regard. He mentions that Schuman lived this regional, national, European and universal principle himself and that he was a friend of humanity. He was a politician whose work was founded on his deep spiritual life. Brugmans underlines the fact that Schuman’s faith deeply influenced his political outlook:

This politician is not only a man of State, but also a man who pulls his strength from the fullness and depth of a universal spiritual life, because there, even the word ‘Europe’ becomes too tight. Rooted in his home country he is a European from Lorraine. But he is still more: a friend of humanity, a member of this humanity, a man in short.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Price, David Heilbron, “Human Rights and the New Definition of Europe”, *Schuman Project*, Bron Communications 1999-2008, [www.schuman.info](http://www.schuman.info).

<sup>40</sup> For a broad definition of “subsidiarity”, see National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All*, Washington, DC: US Catholic Conference, 1986.

<sup>41</sup> Henri Brugmans, speech in *Du Pater Europae aux Pères de l’Europe, 1950–2010*, (Milano: Silvana Editoriale, 2010), 28: “Ce politique n’est pas seulement un homme d’État, mais il est aussi un homme

This statement was given during a speech that Brugmans gave in honour of Schuman's Charlemagne Award in 1958.

#### SCHUMAN'S FAITH IN PERSONAL AND DAILY LIFE

On a more personal level, Schuman's faith as a source of his personal flourishing explains his daily attendance at Mass, his life of prayer, his thorough knowledge of the Roman Catholic faith, his familiarity with Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae* and Aquinas's thoughts on universal synthesis and the need for conciliation and harmony, the latter which was echoed in Schuman's reconciliation policy.

Schuman's faith equally explains why he was highly appreciated by many for his intelligence, sincerity, humility, friendliness and many other virtues that he lived even amidst intense political debates.

#### SCHUMAN'S SPEECHES

Schuman's adherence to have the person with his transcendence at the core of the integration process, is a direct indication of the influence his faith had upon the European unification project. His comments are still topical for Europe today.

Regarding the need to safeguard one's national interests as much as possible, unless contrary to common European interests, while not succumbing to ego-nationalistic desires but instead fostering solidarity, Schuman was very explicit in the three following comments:

We are not, and we shall never be, given to deny our mother country; we shall never forget our duties towards it. But beyond each country, we increasingly and clearly acknowledge the existence of a common good, superior to national interest. A common good into which our countries' individual interests are merged.<sup>42</sup>

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qui tire ses forces de la plénitude et de la profondeur d'une vie spirituelle universelle - car là, même le mot 'Europe' devient trop étroit. Enraciné dans sa patrie, il est un Européen de Lorraine. Mais il est plus encore: un ami de l'humanité, un membre de cette humanité - un homme en somme."

<sup>42</sup> Schuman, *For Europe*, 30. Schuman, *Pour l'Europe*, 40. "Nous ne sommes, nous ne serons jamais des négateurs de la patrie, oublieux des devoirs que nous avons envers elle. Mais au-dessus de

In our minds, European policy is in no way at odds with the patriotic ideal we all share [...] the nation has a role to play vis-à-vis its own citizens, but also, and just as much, vis-à-vis other nations. It cannot therefore retreat into the first of those roles.<sup>43</sup>

We shall have to replace all the tendencies inherited from the past with the notion of solidarity, that is to say the conviction that the real interest of all lies in acknowledging and accepting the interdependency of all. Egoism does not pay any more.<sup>44</sup>

These comments make it clear that people need not be afraid of losing their patriotic ideal but that they similarly need to embrace the interdependency of nations by living solidarity between and among nations. Common interests need to be safeguarded by the supranational organization and must not contradict the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity; in this way, they will foster the national development of all European Member States either immediately or in the future.

Schuman's above mentioned observations are surprising for their topicality regarding the kind of connection that is needed between national and European interests.

The fact that Schuman did not limit his thoughts to the European continent but went beyond the European frontiers while not denying the influence of Christianity on his thought is clear when he states the following:

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chaque patrie nous reconnaissons de plus en plus distinctement l'existence d'un bien commun, supérieur à l'intérêt national, ce bien commun dans lequel se fondent et se confondent les intérêts individuels de nos pays". See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman's Europe*, 163, note 410.

<sup>43</sup> Schuman, *For Europe*, 133–134, 34. Schuman, *Pour l'Europe*, 136–137, 43: "Les Européens seront sauvés dans la mesure où ils seront conscients de leur solidarité devant un même danger. [...] L'angoisse actuelle sera la cause immédiate d'une unification européenne, mais non sa raison d'être. Selon les circonstances contingentes dans lesquelles elle se fera, l'Europe sera plus ou moins complète. Le sera-t-elle jamais? Nul ne saurait le dire. Ce n'est pas une raison pour remettre à plus tard l'effort d'unification. Entreprendre vaut mieux que se résigner, et l'attente de la perfection est une piètre excuse pour l'inaction [...]" See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman's Europe*, 159, note 404.

<sup>44</sup> Schuman, *For Europe*, 35. Schuman, *Pour l'Europe*, 44: "A toutes ces tendances qui nous sont léguées par le passé il faudra substituer la notion de la solidarité, c'est-à-dire la conviction que le véritable intérêt de chacun consiste à reconnaître et à accepter, dans la pratique l'interdépendance de tous. L'égoïsme ne paye plus". See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman's Europe*, 157, note 403.

This Europe which is still split up and torn, continues to be ever more aware of its calling to become the heart of a pacific cooperation of all peoples and of all races at the service of a humanity that embraces all continents.<sup>45</sup>

He clearly indicates the need to not only take into account the European common good, but also the universal common good. The latter should not be realized to the detriment of the former and vice versa. Schuman also reminds the European countries of their responsibility towards the formerly colonized territories, saying:

Today Christianity, enriched by the lived experience along its own history, should help the peoples that are less evolved to adopt the same track of human regeneration. The colonizing nations have not always fully understood their role. The colonizer and the missionary were not always led by the same noble and generous inspiration. The economic capitalism lent itself too easily to methods of egoistic exploitation and neglected the meaning of human responsibility.<sup>46</sup>

It can be concluded that Schuman upholds a subsidiarity and solidarity principle that slowly but surely concerns the entire world, in which borders change their defensive attitude into an open and engaging attitude, becoming as mentioned in the following quote, “lines of contact where the material and cultural exchanges take place”.

What Europe wants is to uplift the rigidity of its borders. They should become the lines of contact where the material and cultural exchanges take place. They define the particular tasks, responsibilities and innovations proper to each country taking into account as well the problems all countries together – and even the continents – face and thus foster solidarity.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Robert Schuman, “Pour l’unité de l’Europe” in *Du Pater Europae aux Pères de l’Europe*, (Milano: Silvana Editoriale, 2010), 30. “L’Europe qui est encore aujourd’hui divisée et déchirée, continue de prendre toujours plus conscience de sa vocation à former le cœur d’une coopération pacifique de tous les peuples et de toutes les races au service d’une humanité embrassant tous les continents.” See also: Krijtenburg, 157, note 402.

<sup>46</sup> Schuman, Speech at the Council of Europe, 1949. See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman’s Europe*, 165, note 413.

<sup>47</sup> Schuman, *For Europe*, 26-27 ; Schuman, *Pour l’Europe*, 34-35. “Au lieu d’être des barrières qui séparent, elles devront devenir des lignes de contacts où s’organisent et s’intensifient les échanges matériels et culturels; elles délimiteront les tâches particulières de chaque pays, les responsabilités et les innovations qui lui seront propres, dans cet ensemble de problèmes qui enjambent les frontières

This is clear and explicit evidence of the influence that Schuman's faith had on politics, which is currently of great relevance in regard to the role of the EU in the world. Schuman, however, also reminds his audience of the need to feed, safeguard and maintain the aim of a reconciled and unified Europe. He stresses the fact that the younger generations want to serve a humanity that is relearning what Christian fraternity means. He similarly underlines the importance of these young people in order to take good care of Europe, when he says:

That this idea of a reconciled Europe, unified and strong, may be from now on the word of order for the young generations that are wanting to serve a humanity finally free from hate and fear, and that after too long periods of pain and hurt, learns again what Christian fraternity means.<sup>48</sup>

Europe needs a living faith, enthusiasm, abnegation and magnanimity. She will be created and her viability will need to be maintained by the young people and because of them, that is, with the active help of those that tomorrow will carry the heavy burden of assuring a future that is more or less threatened. We should not forget in this regard that it is the errors of the past generations that created this situation.

This call directed towards the young people should not be interpreted as a plea in favour of a revolutionary rupture between the generations. On the contrary: it is absolutely necessary that the continuity and the cooperation of the best people of all sorts of ages and categories be assured.<sup>49</sup>

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et même les continents, qui font que tous les pays sont solidaires les uns des autres." See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman's Europe*, 173, note 433.

<sup>48</sup> Robert Schuman, inauguration speech *doctor honoris causa*, 13 December 1952. Archives Départementales de la Moselle, 34J26. "Que cette idée d'une Europe réconciliée, unie et forte soit désormais le mot d'ordre pour les jeunes générations désireuses de servir une humanité enfin affranchie de la haine et de la peur, et qui réapprend, après de trop longs déchirements, la fraternité chrétienne." See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman's Europe*, 161, note 408.

<sup>49</sup> Schuman, "Pour l'unité de l'Europe," 58. "L'Europe a besoin d'un foi vivante, d'enthousiasme, d'abnégation et de magnanimité. Elle sera créée et sa viabilité devra être maintenue par et pour la jeunesse, c'est-à-dire avec l'aide active de ceux à qui reviendra demain la lourde charge d'assurer un avenir plus ou moins menacé. Nous ne devons à ce sujet pas oublier que ce sont les erreurs des générations passées qui ont créé cette situation." "Pareil appel à la jeunesse ne doit pas être compris comme un plaidoyer en faveur d'une rupture révolutionnaire entre les générations. Au contraire : il est indispensable que reste assurée la continuité et la coopération des meilleurs éléments de toutes les classes d'âge et catégories de population." See also: Krijtenburg, *Schuman's Europe*, 162, note 409.



## CONCLUSION

Schuman's desire to be a faithful instrument of Providence, accompanied by his wish to attain peace on the European continent and his personal capacity to contribute to its realization, highlights not only his personal flourishing in and through the European unification project, but also the goal of the European unification project as such, which strives for the personal flourishing of each citizen and his transcendence.

Schuman wanted to give heed to his vocation in becoming a "saint in a suit". Professionally, this meant the task of acquiring peace on the European continent, a peace based on a common spiritual and cultural heritage. In addition to safeguarding justice, human rights and the rule of law, his means were reconciliation, effective solidarity beyond borders, subsidiarity and, where needed, supranational action and protection of common European interests that do not act contrary to universal interests. All of this was meant to be coherent with the Social Doctrine of the Church. His Catholic faith thus found expression in his actions. Living according to his beliefs influenced his reasoning on the necessity of European integration and the way in which it should be realized. War would thus become unthinkable, and peace would foster economic and political interdependence at the service of man. Christianity and world politics hence found a clearly fruitful expression in a complementary way.

Schuman's Catholic background, being from the Franco-German conflictive border region, and his political circumstances, contributed to the realization of his grand ideal to make war not only unthinkable, but also impossible on the European continent. His main source of inspiration, the Catholic faith, made him a person who was acknowledged and admired for his integrity. His faith inspired his politics, which are still very relevant for emphasizing the core values and principles of European integration and the importance of European citizenship for proper European unification. According to Schuman, there are two fundamental principles for proper integration and citizenship:

1. Acknowledgement of the common roots in which man with his transcendence occupies the pivotal role. Man should be able to flourish and give heed to his vocation.

2. Application of the subsidiarity and solidarity principles on a regional, national, European and universal level. Economy and politics need to serve primarily the person in his development, not the other way around, which would make the person an instrument of the economy or politics.

Following Schuman's line of thought, it can be concluded that the root of today's problems extends beyond the economic crisis, residing precisely in the partial and total negation of those two fundamental principles and the acknowledgement of the pivotal role of man and his transcendence.

Schuman gave heed to the divine call to sanctity in the midst of the world, and he is now in the process of beatification. It is a rare thing for a politician to be beatified. The last one was Sir Thomas More (1478 – 1535). It is difficult to find an example of a statesman with a stronger connection between his inspiration and politics.

#### EPILOGUE

How can Schuman's legacy regarding personal flourishing revive the EU today when faith seems so absent? What should we make of the current EU crisis, the lack of solidarity and subsidiarity among Member States and States outside of Europe? How can these issues ever be solved if common heritage and common good are not recognized, and if man serves the economy instead of the other way around? In an increasingly secular Western world, the idea of striving to be a faithful instrument in the hands of God, as Schuman was, is often not understood. Personal flourishing in the EU today should begin from the level of a personal commitment to try to live the virtues better so as to live in ever closer harmony with one's deepest self and with others and therefore also with the universal principles present in every human being. Stephen Covey explains this concept well, in popular language, with his book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*<sup>50</sup>. The Stimulus-Response Model that Covey

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<sup>50</sup> Covey, Stephen R, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 32.

speaks about often had eye-opening results on students at The Hague University. It made them aware of their own response-ability of finding a deeper meaning in their lives and their studies. It enkindled in them a desire for personal flourishing and solidarity on the basis of universal guidelines. Parents, friends and fellow-students were astonished by the positive change they were discovering in their child, friend or classmate. Therefore one might ask what need to be the first step that EU officials should take, aside from studying Schuman's thoughts on European unification. Virtuous and ethical behavior and thoughts, fed by the desire to uplift society using Schuman's frame of reference, might well be the very first steps that lead to personal flourishing, helping the EU out of its current state of upheaval and eventually back onto the path of reconciliation, effective solidarity and subsidiarity, at the service of man and his transcendence, as was Schuman's desire.

In short, the original vision on European unification according to its main architect, Robert Schuman, turns out to be still highly topical. Focusing and expanding on these principles of subsidiarity and effective solidarity in which the human person with his transcendence is at the core, might help to provide not only the personal flourishing of the people as such, but also contribute to come to a renewed original blueprint for the European Union today. The EU would then be an "organization" that takes care of the personal flourishing of its inhabitants and of those it is in touch with and thus help to provoke another peaceful revolution in Europe and in the world as Schuman provoked in his time with the Schuman Declaration.

Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission since 1 November 2014, recalled in her speech to students and Professors at Leiden University, The Netherlands, on 16 April 2015, the need to take care of the values upon which the Founding Fathers built the European Union and which are nowadays at stake "we should never forget the responsibility this gives us"<sup>51</sup> "We have the duty

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<sup>51</sup> Federica Mogherini, Speech "What is the role of the EU in the world?" Leiden University, The Hague, 16 April 2015.

to rebuild our EU, [...] starting from ourselves.”<sup>52</sup> She recognized the need to go back to the initial principles.

It is Pope Francis, however, who indicated the vision and way to be taken when he spoke in the European Parliament on 25 November 2014. His words are a call to give heed to the original vision on European unification which was and still is fully in line with the social doctrine of the Church:

It is a message of encouragement to return to the firm conviction of the founders of the European Union, who envisioned a future based on the capacity to work together in bridging divisions and in fostering peace and fellowship between all the peoples of this continent. At the heart of this ambitious political project was confidence in man, not so much as a citizen or an economic agent, but in man, in men and women as persons endowed with *transcendent dignity*.<sup>53</sup>

It’s up to each one of us, to take it to heart and make it flourish, and thus also to each of the leaders of institutions to facilitate and encourage this among its people(s). A challenge to be taken that can do a world of good.

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<sup>52</sup> Federica Mogherini, Speech at the European Parliament. Strasbourg, 14 January 2015.

<sup>53</sup> Pope Francis, Address to European Parliament, Strasbourg, 25 November 2014.

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