

International Conference on the History of Opus Dei (1939-1962)

June 16 and 17, 2021

The Center of Documentation and Research on Saint Josemaría Escrivá de
Balaguer(CEDEJ)
Universidad de Navarra

Academic Justification

With a different degree of analysis, since the 70s of the 20th century, historiography has dealt with various aspects related to the aims, members, activity, development and dimension of Opus Dei. Likewise, there are also numerous references to this institution of the Catholic Church or to some of its members of greater public importance, both in works on the history of Spain and Latin America, as well as in publications on the history of the Church and religious history of the 20th or 21st century.

About Opus Dei, Artigues (1968), Bécarud (1971), Moncada (1974, 2010) and Ynfante (1970 and 1996) attribute a political nature to it. Some authors think that this Catholic institution has a sectarian character, such as Le Vaillant (1971), Walsh (1990), Hutchison (1995) or Des Mazery (2005). Others such as Le Tourneau (1984), West (1989), Gómez Pérez (1992), Nefontaine (1993), Messori (1994), Romano (1994) Plunkett (2006) or Allen (2005) reject this thesis and present a panoramic vision on its nature, purpose, members, etc. The sociological methodology of Hertel (1985), Estruch (1993) or Fernández Mostaza (1998) supports some critical conclusions about the institution. Rocca (1985) and Fuenmayor et al. (1989) have analyzed its legal evolution, with somewhat antagonistic approaches.

These and other studies indicate a certain polarization in the field. It is also a feature of the publications on its founder Josemaría Escrivá and, to a lesser extent, his first two successors, Álvaro del Portillo and Javier Echevarría, or on various initiatives launched by members of the Work.

More recent studies on the development of the institution between 1928 and 1945, such as those by González Gullón (2016 and 2018), Díaz Hernández (2018 and 2020) or Martínez Sánchez and others (2020), or the historical articles of the journal "Studia et Documenta" drawn from unexplored archive sources, provide historiography with somewhat novel approaches and visions about this history.

More than twenty years after The Center of Documentation and Research on Saint Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer (Universidad de Navarra), part of the St. Josemaría Historical Institute of Rome, began the task of facing this history in an academic way, this scientific meeting is convened. The Conference proposes as objectives: (1) to present a state of the art of the ongoing investigations on Opus Dei;

(2) discuss various methodological models pertaining for that history; (3) bring together specialists from various areas related to the cultural, religious and social context of the history of Opus Dei; (and 4) serve as a forum for historiographic exchange.

Proposal submission

We encourage the presentation of communications that meet these objectives and addressed the following thematic areas, which the Conference is structured:

- Historiography and methodologies
- Women and Catholicism
- Catholic initiatives

Proposals will be submitted for evaluation. The deadline for abstracts' submission is December 15, 2020 and will include:

- Academic affiliation (University or Research Center)
- A brief curriculum vitae (maximum one page)
- Provisional title
- Summary of the communication: maximum length of 400 words, that must include methodology, sources and first conclusions.
- An email contact

Accepted languages: Spanish and English

Complete information about the conference in:
<https://www.unav.edu/web/congreso-sobre-historia-del-opus-dei/>

Organizers

Santiago Martínez (The Center of Documentation and Research on Saint
Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer, CEDEJ, Universidad de Navarra)
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Secretary: María Sandúa

We appreciate all collaboration for the dissemination of this Conference, and we remain at your disposal for any additional information in the mail histopusdei@unav.es

Sincerely,
The organizing committee