

EUROPE: ECONOMY

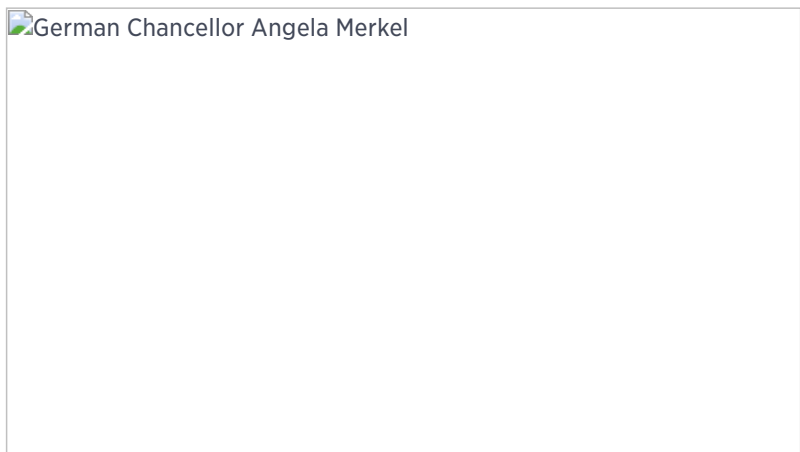
Angela Merkel Ridiculed as 'Godmother' of Europe


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Governing like a mafia boss, obsessed with power and the source of the euro zone's misery – not the usual epithets ascribed to German Chancellor Angela Merkel. But these are latest to be leveled at her by Gertrud Höhler, author of “The Godmother: How Angela Merkel is Reconstructing Germany”.


 German Chancellor Angela Merkel

Michael Gottschalk | AFP | Getty Images

German Chancellor Angela Merkel

In the biography on the German leader, Höhler, a member of Merkel's conservative Christian Democrat party and a former government advisor argues that Merkel has no real understanding of democracy and that she has ruined the euro .

Making the analogy between Merkel's leadership and that of “Don Corleone,” the fictional mafia boss figure played by Marlon Brando in the movie “The Godfather,” Höhler's book “Die Patin” (“The Godmother”) states that Merkel's aim is to become the Chancellor of Europe.

The book accuses her of eroding democracy in Germany over her seven years at the top. Höhler writes that Merkel has built power structures that focus on non-elected bodies (such as the European Central Bank)

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rather than democratic structures (such as the Bundesbank, Germany's Central Bank that is elected).

Calling Merkel's governing method "das System M" ("M" stands for "Macht", the German word for power) Höhler says that Merkel, named by Forbes magazine as the [most powerful woman on earth](#), is driven by a quest to remain in power.

Speaking to CNBC, Höhler said Angela Merkel enjoyed the position of "queen of Europe" as the region's debt crisis focused attention on her and Germany.

"In the eyes of the other countries in Europe, Germany is the strongest economy and that means everyone wants Germany's money - and Angela Merkel is very proud to be the queen of Europe"

Höhler conceded that Merkel was a "strong leader" whose stance on Europe maintained her popularity in the polls but "that brings more mistakes for us with very passionate voters in Germany who don't understand anything," she added.

Indeed, a [recent poll of 2,502 voters](#) by the Forsa Research Institute published last Wednesday showed that Merkel was ahead of her three rival party leaders and would beat them in 2013 elections, as the results stand.

Published in Stern magazine, polls showed Merkel would defeat Peer Steinbrueck, a Social Democrat who was finance minister during her first term, by 50 percent to 28 percent if voters could elect the Chancellor directly.

Höhler said that Merkel is mercurial politically.

"What has started with Mrs. Merkel is that the differences between the political parties are getting lost, she is a little bit [of every party]. When you vote for Merkel you get a little bit of all possibilities of the German political spectrum."

She added that Merkel's style of leadership was evasive, with her style to not answer questions directly.

"The consequence of Merkel's style of softening over questions and answers means that you never get a clear, or even a bad, message."

"You get only this [kind of] sentence "Yes, when the euro is corrupt, then we have corruption in Europe," and people just say "ok, understood" and there are no questions."

However, despite Höhler's indictment of Merkel's leadership, Geoffrey Yu, FX analyst at UBS, defended her record during her tenure of German leadership.

"If we think about her democratic credentials and her personal approval ratings, as well as the way she's handled the crisis so far, she's actually been quite popular in Germany relative to other euro zone leaders," Yu told CNBC's ["Squawk Box Europe."](#)

"She's done the best that she could in very difficult circumstances.

...and some are just making fun of her in very unkind circumstances, especially bearing in mind that she has her own political issues to think about next year [as German elections approach].”

German Chancellor Angela Merkel is meeting with European Central Bank chief Mario Drag in Berlin on Tuesday. They are expected to discuss the euro zone debt crisis, though no press conference is expected to follow their talks.



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