Preface

Directeur général honoraire à la Commission européenne et créateur, en 1973, de l'*Eurobaromètre*, je souhaiterais recevoir une documentation aussi complète que possible sur les recherches réalisées dans le cadre du Programme 'Eurosphère'. Je me permets de rappeler que le concept d' 'Eurosphère' semble avoir été introduit dans la recherche socio-politique dès le début des années 60; cf. *Science politique et intégration européenne*, par Jean Meynaud et Dusan Sidjanski, Institut d'études européennes, Genève, 1965. J.-R. Rabier.¹

I received this message on 23 August 2012. The sender of the e-mail was Jacques-René Rabier, the founder of two central European institutions – Eurobarometer and the Press and Information Service of High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community. At the time, I was writing the final scientific reports of Eurosphere, an international research project that I was leading in the period between February 2007 and July 2012 with funding from the European Union's Sixth Framework Programme.² Not only because high-standing politicians' attention to the project results was desirable in order to increase its impact, but also out of personal curiosity, my correspondence with Mr Rabier continued for a few rounds more. I had certainly hoped current leaders of the European Union would come across at least an executive summary of the results of my project along with other projects. What I did not expect was to be micro-managed by a prominent member of the founder generation who still retained an enthusiastic and impatient curiosity about the current state of their artwork.

Writing to me that the term 'Eurosphere' was introduced into the academic literature in a book by Jean Meynaud and Dusan Sidjanski in 1965, Mr Rabier was being too modest by omitting to mention that the authors had actually written that the term 'Eurosphere' had been invented by Jacques-René Rabier and Jean Meynaud (Meynaud and Sidjanski 1965: 25). They defined the concept as the sphere of those who participate in the European integration processes actively, those who are directly affected by its consequences, and those who affect the integration process by expressing solidarity with the European. With the Eurosphere they aimed to spread and catalyse European integration. Later, although

the name was forgotten, the European Community and the European Union continued to build on the founding generation's work and use the Eurosphere as a core element of European integration policies.

This book is about the outcome of the efforts of a handful of visionary and engaged Europeanists who strove, and are still doing so, to institute a transnational European public sphere in order to connect Europe's supranational institutions with individual citizens. Its ten chapters assess the outcomes of the Eurosphere's introduction into the European Union system, looking at its impacts in different dimensions of the European public sphere. With a view to discovering the preconditions for linking European citizens with the EU political institutions through the emerging European public sphere, the roles of various public sphere participants in the formation of a European public sphere are studied. This is done by mapping and explaining the extent to which participants of public debates in Europe (including citizens, public interest organizations, political parties, think tanks, media and the EU institutions) are interconnected through political cleavages, transnational networks, collaboration, discourses, mass media, and policymaking structures and processes.

The ten chapters in this book, taken together, have discovered a central feature of European integration, namely a particular system of Europe-wide political cleavages with integrative effects, which is manifest in the networking webs and discursive patterns of the collective actors participating in public debates in Europe. These political cleavages have been brought about by the very existence of the Eurosphere. To say the last thing first, the conclusion of this book is as follows.

A European public sphere can be said to exist when the already existing public spaces (at transnational, national and sub-national levels) come into resilient patterns of relationships of collaboration, conflict and contestation with the EU-initiated, pro-European, elite-dominated supranational public and its vertically organized, top-down trans-European public space, that is, the Eurosphere. In other words, the European public sphere is a constellation of historically existing and new ethnic, religious, minority-related, national and transnational public spaces and publics which constitute (and which are welded to each other by) a system of contesting discourses, alliances and polarizations. This conceptualization is entrenched in an agonistic pluralism perspective of a public sphere.

The chapters in this volume systematically compare the ways in which the European Union, national public sphere participants (media, civil society organizations, political parties and policy research institutes) and transnational networks of these are trying to create links (or break them) between citizens and the political institutions of the European Union

across many boundaries. The main focus is on the European Union policies aiming to create a common European public sphere, and how the EU policies on this matter are (mis)aligned with the priorities of other participants (including individual citizens) in public debates. Although the chapters address a variety of political cleavages, the common cleavage dimension that all chapters address is the centre–periphery cleavage, that is, collaboration, conflict and contestation between elites at European and national levels.

The volume is organized along particular dimensions of politics identified through a synthesis of the theory of agonistic pluralism on democracy, the theory of the deliberative public sphere and the theory of political cleavages on party systems. Thus, Chantal Mouffe, Jürgen Habermas and Stein Rokkan are the theoreticians and analysts who have partly inspired the overall analytical approach of this book. Additional inspiration comes from our own findings and the researchers who contributed to this project. Rokkan successfully incorporated the aggregative, deliberative and agonistic dimensions of politics in his conceptual maps. The analytical distinctions he made in his typology of citizen intervention in politics were used as one criterion when selecting the contributions to be included and structuring the chapters in this book. Rokkan identifies two channels of citizen intervention in democratic politics. The first is the numerical channel, as he calls it, which is about elections, political parties and voters. The second is the corporate-plural channel, which concerns the direct interventions by civil society, including both corporate and public interest groups, into government's decision-making processes. This channel is about negotiation, deliberation and policymaking. The media channel, on the other hand, concerns citizens' and civil society's uninterrupted critical voice. Today, empirical studies of the public sphere mainly revolve around the media channel, and the concepts and method tools deployed are devised to map and understand the media channel. This book diverges from this current trend by studying the three channels under a common conceptual frame, which is presented in Chapter 1.

These three channels are competitive. In the numerical channel parties try to gain government power through elections. In the corporate-plural channel, public and corporate interest groups strive to get the attention and recognition of governments and citizens for their causes. In the media channel, different media organizations try to win readers and audience by creating widely appealing news framings, whereas political and social actors strive to get the media's attention. Social and political actors that are competing in one of these channels have to be active speakers in public debates if they want to survive and win, because they

can only achieve their goals by making themselves and their causes visible to the general public through participation, persuasion and legitimation in mediated public debates. Therefore, they are the most obvious speakers and listeners in the European public sphere. The actors that are studied here are political parties, non-state organizations (public interest groups: non-governmental organizations and social movement organizations), think tanks (policy research institutes including advocacy think tanks), and newspapers and TV channels. The channels that they use to intervene in public debates are, as noted, the numerical channel, corporate-plural channel and media channel. Chapters 3 to 5 focus on the media channel (the European Union's media policies, traditional mass media and social media). Chapters 6 and 7 assess the corporate-plural dimension (think tanks and minority organizations); it should be noted that, in addition to assessing the traditional media dimension, Chapter 4 addresses issues of political cleavages in the corporate-plural dimension when comparing national and European elites' discourses with media framings. Chapters 8 and 9 contribute to understanding the numeric channels of the European public sphere (political parties and formation of an agonistic European demos).

The volume opens with theoretical and conceptual reflections in Chapter 1, authored by Hakan G. Sicakkan, inquiring into the relationship between the Eurosphere, a pro-EU public space constructed by the supranational institutions, and the formation of the European public sphere. He posits the constitutive role of the Eurosphere in the ongoing formation of a European public sphere. The chapter presents a brief history of the making of the Eurosphere by the founding fathers of the European Union. Linking the Eurosphere and the European public sphere to each other causally in the conceptual framework of a pluralist-agonistic perspective, the author argues that the Eurosphere has a constitutive role in the formation of the European public sphere. Finally, he identifies the public spaces, publics, social and political actors (adversaries) and political cleavages (agons) that constitute the agonistic European public sphere.

In Chapter 2 Wanda Dressler maps the territorial spread and diversity of the European publics that the European Union is currently aiming to link with its political structures. This chapter should be regarded as an exploration into the highly complex territorial basis of the publics and public spaces of Europe, and the policies that the European Union deploys both to respect and to transcend the internal boundaries that territorial diversity maintains. The chapter shows how the regionalization process brought about a new diversity structure within a transformed, integral European territorial space. Because the current multi-level and

cross-border territorial organization and increased poly-ethnic features within it are far too complex and considerably more conflict-laden than aggregative and deliberative public sphere theories assume, Dressler concludes by pointing to the newly emerging agonistic features of the transformed European territorial space as an important feature of the European public sphere.

After these two chapters focusing on the theoretical and historical background of the European Union's public sphere and territorial transformation policies, the book starts its empirical contributions with three chapters devoted to analysis of the mediated public sphere (Chapters 3, 4 and 5).

Chapter 3 by Monika Mokre analyses EC/EU policies from a European public sphere perspective, asking how media structures and their framing conditions affect the political function of media for the European public sphere and, especially, the emergence of an agonistic European public sphere not exclusively structured by national cleavages. In her historical overview of the European Union's media policies and an evaluation of their impact on the European public sphere, Mokre finds that media policies have proven successful in reducing national barriers for broadcasting and establishing a single European media market but that they did not succeed in providing centralized forms of information distribution and exchange. Following this, the chapter presents empirical results of the Eurosphere project on the preferences of European actors with regard to the European public sphere. These preferences are compared with the actual activities of the European Commission. Mokre argues that the results of the Eurosphere project have shown a possible alternative to the European Union's centralized approach to transnational exchange of news and the attempts of journalists to include a European dimension in media coverage. In the long run, this could lead to an agonistic European public sphere not exclusively structured by national cleavages. Concluding, the chapter discusses possible future developments of media policies furthering inclusive European public spheres.

In Chapter 4 Hakan G. Sicakkan asks to what extent the Eurosphere has succeeded in constituting a European public sphere. The author develops an analysis frame deriving from the neo-functionalist assumption that ongoing European integration is similar to historical state and nation building processes. He posits that, for this to be true, we must observe that the European Union's perspectives on significant issues are at least partly embraced by trans-European and national elites and national mass media. He compares the citizenship and diversity discourses of national and trans-European elites with media framings and EU policies. National media seem to reflect the preferences of national

elites and the premises behind the European Union policies better than they do the preferences of trans-European elites. This is because trans-European elites are exposed more to the European Commission, which is the most transnationalized political institution in the European Union's political system, whereas European Union laws and policies are directly affected by national elites through the Council of Ministers, an institution with more intergovernmental features. If we recognize that the European Commission and the Eurosphere represent the spirit of European integration to a greater extent than the latter, European elites' integration ambition is partly reflected in national public spheres.

Chapter 5 by Deniz Neriman Duru and Hans-Jörg Trenz turns to new media and another type of elite group that contributes to the formation of the European public sphere. They discuss the role of social media and 'expats', mobile foreign citizens (both EU and non-EU), in the formation of a European public sphere. The authors explore the ways in which social networking media provide platforms for transnational encounters between expats and other groups in a local public space, Copenhagen in Denmark. By analysing the socialization and cultural self-representation of expats, they argue that social networking media shift the frontiers of identities between expats and locals, and catalyse a new spirit of hybridity and creative 'playing with diversity' that become characteristic for the local public sphere. Mobility and citizenship rights as facilitated by the Europe of free movement contribute in this sense to the consolidation of a European public sphere, which is not based on sharp distinctions but where transnational encounters are rather kept in flow with an elite group of EU mobiles and other less privileged people (EU and non-EU migrants) in constant exchange with each other.

The next three chapters concern the corporate-plural channel of non-state organizations that are active in the national and European public spheres. These are organizations that are engaged in influencing government policies directly through conducting and disseminating policy analyses, lobbying, participating in consultations and policy proposals, mobilizing citizens and organizing grassroots events. Here, we concentrate particularly on the EU think tanks (Chapter 6) and minority organizations (Chapter 7).

Chapter 6, authored by Marybel Perez, assesses the extent to which national think tanks and their trans-European networks contribute to the articulation of a European public sphere. Drawing on think tank scholarship and research conducted in the Eurosphere project, the author discusses how think tanks contribute to the moulding of the public sphere at the transnational and global levels where structures of communication are complex and fragmented. To this end, the analysis focuses on EU

think tanks' participation in EU policymaking. Perez seeks answers to a range of questions about the ways in which policy research institutes and think tanks create public spaces of communication between the EU and other stakeholders, and how they in turn are constrained by the specific features of the EU policymaking mechanisms. She also considers the conditions under which trans-European think tank networks and the EU have a socializing effect on national think tanks. Think tanks contribute to the definition and reproduction of ideas through the dissemination of books and reports, appearing in interviews, lecturing at educational institutions, and so on. Through these activities, think tanks create links between different kinds of actors, and through their policy analysis they contribute to the definition and reproduction of discourses that shape the public sphere. The chapter poses that EU think tanks' most significant contribution to the trans-European public sphere is creating platforms for interaction and socializing ideas.

In Chapter 7 Jan H. van de Beek and Floris Vermeulen assess the European Union's public consultation mechanisms from the perspective of the representation needs of minority organizations. After mapping the EU's objectives concerning its consultation system, the discrepancy between these objectives and what minority organizations want is assessed. The minority groups that are considered are regional national minorities, Roma, Jews, Muslim immigrants and non-religious immigrants. Mainstream political parties in each country are used as a control group. Large differences between groups are found in the degree of institutionalization of the EU consultation system, which is most developed for national regional minorities and Roma, and least for non-religious immigrants, where Jews have a proactive attitude and consultation of Muslim immigrants is increasing. Seen from the perspective of the ethnic groups, consultation is driven by the wish to participate (regional national minorities), protect religious rights (Jews, Muslim immigrants), influence EU foreign policy (Jews) and seek protection against discrimination (Roma). Seen from the perspective of EU institutions, gaining legitimacy (through being more representative, and protecting minority rights) is the driving force, though the EU is not very successful in this respect.

Chapters 6 and 7 should be read in parallel with the comparative analysis of non-state organizations and media actors in Chapter 4. The first part of Chapter 4 assesses the differences in discourses of national and trans-European elites. These three chapters show the main political cleavages and the patterns of collaboration and polarization between the trans-European and national elites working in different kinds of non-state organizations.

Next come two chapters about the social and political actors that are operating in the numeric channel, that is, political parties (Chapter 8) and citizens (Chapter 9). Chapter 8 looks at the ways in which the preferences of national elites are aligned or de-aligned with European party groups in the European Parliament, whereas Chapter 9 maps the discrepancy between the preferences of national elites and individual citizens. In this sense, these two chapters are complementary in showing the links from citizens to the European Union institutions in the numeric channel. Chapter 9 can also be read synchronously with Chapter 4 in order to track the links between citizens and the European Union institutions through the corporate-plural channel.

Robert Sata focuses in Chapter 8 on the question of whether parties contribute to or hinder the democratic performance of the European Union and what roles national parties and European party groups play in aggregating political preferences in the European Parliament. Literature on European integration frequently states an elite–citizens gap in European politics partly due to the fact that European political parties do not compete on European but domestic issues. At the same time, national parties successfully formed European party groups to compete in the European arena, and access to European Parliament, Council or other institutions of the EU is mainly through the channels of party politics. Yet it is unclear whether parties manage to link national constituencies with the EU or national loyalties impact negatively on the possibilities of a European public sphere. The chapter analyses these issues by examining alignments and misalignments between stances and objectives of national political elites and European party groups. Enlisting the stances and objectives of the national and European party elites enables us to analyse how the European public sphere is articulated and, even more importantly, to identify possible areas of contestation among the different arenas. An examination of differences between positions of the national political elite and the European party groups provides a deeper insight into the actual importance of European parties, and the feasibility and acceptability of a common European public sphere of political elites.

In Chapter 9, Martina Klicperová-Baker and Jaroslav Košťál estimate the preconditions of European integration, the European demos and the European public sphere. Democracies are conflict resolution systems; they are defined by the constructive solution of multiple political cleavages. The attitudes and values of their citizens should not be in a destructive antagonistic clash but, instead, in an agonistic, benign competition. The European demos was operationalized in terms of democratic spirit, tolerance and civility; the public sphere was assessed by analysis of ideologies. The European Values Study (EVS) served as the data

source. The results suggest that each of the countries under study differs by its preconditions for the democratic demos. At the same time, there is a significant level of commonality. The existence of a European public was assessed by an analysis of ideologies representing various political orientations of European citizens. The ideologies appear to be fragmented by countries and by geopolitical regions. Thus, as expected, rather than the existence of a general European public we observed the partitioned ideology of individual countries or regions. Yet, at the same time, we identified significant clusters of democrats, which were particularly numerous among the elites. The democratic elites appear as most instrumental in the formation of a benign, agonistic system at the European level. It is concluded that the European demos has the necessary preconditions in the tolerant democratic mentality which is abundant in Northern and Western Europe while also to some degree represented in all other nations. In contrast, the preconditions for a unified public were not confirmed, as ideologies appeared to be geopolitically partitioned.

Taken together, these two chapters uncover the issues of conflict and contestation in the numeric channel between different segments of society and different levels of the EU political system, from individual citizens and national parties to the European Parliament party groups, giving a rather detailed picture of the extent to which the European numeric channel actually gives voice to the citizens and transmits their concerns to the European level, that is, to the European Parliament and EU policymaking.

The final chapter draws general conclusions beyond what each chapter provides. It depicts the outcomes of the European Union's policies aiming to form a European public sphere and puts these empirical findings in the theoretical context developed in Chapter 1. It draws the general lines between the new links and political cleavages generated by the European Union policies. Based on these, the chapter briefly reflects on the current state of the art pertaining to the theorization of the transnational public sphere, with a focus on its conceptualization and explanation of its emergence. Focusing on the outcomes of the relationships of collaboration, conflict and contestation between national collective actors and pan-European networks, the main contribution of this volume is, thus, to introduce and evaluate the Eurosphere's constitutive role in the formation of the European public sphere. We show how the intended and unintended outcomes of the European founding fathers' Eurosphere initiative sparked the formation of an agonistic European public sphere.

I would like to express my gratitude to those who contributed to the making of this book. Thanks to the European Commission for a research grant that covered our Eurosphere project activities in 16 countries for five and a half years in the Sixth Framework Programme. Thanks also to the Norwegian Research Council and the University of Bergen, my home university, which contributed with additional resources for funding Ph.D. scholarships and for the management and coordination of the overall project. The Meltzer Research Fund provided generous resources for my sabbatical leave to be spent at the European University Institute, Sciences Po and the Humboldt University, which made it possible for me to write Chapters 1, 4 and 10 of this book. I would also like to thank Rainer Bauböck (European University Institute), Riva Kastoryano (Sciences Po) and Gökçe Yurdakul (Humboldt University), who made the Meltzer Research Fund grant possible by kindly inviting me to hold visiting fellowships at their universities.

Finally, this book would not be possible without the contribution of the 138 senior and junior researchers who worked in the Eurosphere project. Only a couple of them have authored the chapters of this volume, but there is a huge amount of work done by the other researchers who do not appear in this book, including research design, data collection and registration, data analysis and report writing. Unfortunately, I do not have enough space to list their names here. However, a list of their names can be found on the Eurosphere project's website.³

Hakan G. Sicakkan

26 March 2016

Badia-Fiesolana, Florence

NOTES

1. 'As Honorary Director General at the European Commission and the creator in 1973 of the *Eurobarometer*, I would like to receive as much documentation as possible on the research conducted under the program "Eurosphere". Allow me to recall that the concept of "Eurosphere" seems to have been introduced into the socio-political research in the early 60s; cf. *Political Science and European Integration*, by Jean Meynaud and Dusan Sidjanski, Institute of European Studies, Geneva, 1965. J.-R. Rabier'.
2. The project's full title was Diversity and the European Public Sphere: Towards a Citizens' Europe. With the Eurosphere project, we sought answers to the question of 'Under what conditions and to what extent is a transnational public sphere possible in Europe?' The project was funded by the European Union's Sixth Framework Programme. A total of 138 researchers working at 17 research and higher education institutions in 16 European countries contributed to its different components. Comprehensive information about the project and the final reports presenting its results can be accessed at <https://eurosphere.b.uib.no/>.
3. See <https://eurosphere.b.uib.no/> or <http://eurospheres.org>.

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