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European Public Spheres

The euro crisis has led to an unprecedented Europeanization and politicization of public spheres across the continent. In this volume, leading scholars make two claims. First, they suggest that transnational cross-border communication in Europe has been encouraged through the gradual Europeanization of national as well as issue-specific public spheres. Second, the politicization of European affairs – at the European Union (EU) level and in the domestic politics of member states – is inevitable and here to stay. Europeanized public spheres, whether elite media, mass media, or social media such as the internet, provide the arenas in which the politicization of European and EU issues takes place. *European Public Spheres* explores the history of these developments, the nature of politicization in the public spheres as well as its likely consequences, and the normative implications for European public life.

THOMAS RISSE is Professor of International Politics at the Otto Suhr Institute of Political Science at the Freie Universität Berlin, and he is coordinator of the Research Center 700 "Governance of Areas of Limited Statehood" and co-director of the Research College "Transformative Power of Europe," both funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). His publications include *A Community of Europeans? Transnational Identities and Public Spheres* (Cornell University Press, 2010); *The Persistent Power of Human Rights: From Commitment to Compliance* (Cambridge University Press, 2013, co-edited with Stephen C. Ropp and Kathryn Sikkink); and *External Actors, State-Building and Service Provision in Areas of Limited Statehood* (special issue of *Governance*, 2014, with Stephen D. Krasner).

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Preface

When we started working on this book in early 2011, the euro crisis was in full swing. At the same time, we had practically no idea whether European integration would remain untouched and how the euro crisis would impact the central theme of this book – namely, the Europeanization of public spheres. Would Europe relapse into various nationalisms, would we see an increased politicization of European affairs (as some hoped and others feared), or would the European Union (EU) evolve into a full-fledged transnational community of communication?

Three years later, when this book went into production, European integration seemed to have survived the attacks of financial markets for the time being, but Southern Europe was still not out of the worst economic crises in decades, experiencing enormous (youth) unemployment. Regarding public spheres, the authors in this book agree that we observe growing politicization of European issues everywhere. However, we do not have consensus on the possible consequences (see, e.g., Chapters 6, 8, 9, and 10 in this volume).

Given these uncertainties, writing a book on European public spheres is a risky enterprise because some of the findings might be obsolete by the time the book is published. It is, however, a calculated risk because this book summarizes more than fifteen years of research on the Europeanization of public spheres, and it brings together authors who have been intimately involved in the various studies. The first task of this book, therefore, is a stock-taking exercise: What do we know about the Europeanization of public spheres, and what are the major controversies with regard to theory-building, measurements, and empirical findings? Second, we ask whether and how the Europeanization of public spheres affects social and political affairs in Europe. Third, the book discusses the implications of these various findings and explanations for theory-building, on the one hand, and for normative questions related to European democracy, on the other.

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The book originated in the framework of the Berlin-based Research College "Transformative Power of Europe," which has been directed by Tanja Börzel and Thomas Risse since 2008 and has provided a unique intellectual environment to discuss the diffusion of ideas in Europe and beyond. We are extremely grateful for the generous support of the German Research Foundation (DFG; *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*), without which this book would not have been possible. The two authors' workshops in Berlin (April 29–30, 2011, and January 13–14, 2012) took place within the framework of the Research College.

In this context, we owe many people our gratitude for critical input during the project. First, special thanks go to Marianne Van de Steeg, who has worked with Thomas Risse on European public spheres since the late 1990s. Without her, this project would not have gotten off the ground. Moreover, we received critical input for the project from Stephanie Anderson, Patrick Bijsmans, Tanja Börzel, Pieter De Wilde, Christiane Eilders, Jürgen Gerhards, Liesbet Hooghe, Sally Isaac, Nico Jaspers, Gary Marks, Jan-Henrik Meyer, Vera Van Hüllen, and Michael Zürn. We also thank two anonymous reviewers for their comments and suggestions. As always, John Haslam and Carrie Parkinson at Cambridge University Press helped the project along the way. We also thank Constance Burt for copyediting, Marvin Grosse for compiling the bibliography, and Ariel O. Tuplano for constructing the index, as well as Alexander Kuhles, Arindam Bose, Catherine Ruth Craven, David Morris, and Stefan Wiechmann for their help at various stages of the production process.

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