

4

European Demos, Citizenship and Migrants in a Globalized World: Some Critical Reflections from a Habermasian Perspective

Spiros Makris

The European Union (EU), Euroscepticism and the Refugee Crisis, or the European Public Sphere Under Threat

Unquestionably, the fact that the 2014 European Union (EU) parliamentary election led to the most Eurosceptic parliament in the long history of the institution has brought to the fore a series of approaches to address the possible effects of the powerful rise of Euroscepticism on the progress of European political integration as a whole. It is worth noting that roughly a quarter of all seats went to Eurosceptic political parties or protest parties.¹ Bearing in mind that the renewed and strengthened Euroscepticism during the last EU electoral campaign saw the formation of a new Eurosceptic political group in the European parliament, paradoxically called “Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy” (EFDD), we could argue that this important new electoral data regarding the EU’s

S. Makris (✉)

University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece

© The Author(s) 2018

M. Caselli, G. Gilardoni (eds.), *Globalization, Supranational Dynamics and Local Experiences*, Europe in a Global Context,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-64075-4_4

political future in a globalized era has without a doubt created vivid discussion and speculation around the EU's institutional, ideological and legislative procedure in the twenty-first century, especially on crucial topics concerning political freedoms (e.g., freedom of speech, freedom of movement, etc.) or migrants and refugees' human rights (Nathan 2013). Additionally, it is more than evident that Brexit, Donald Trump's election in the USA (2016) and the increasing power of so-called *right-wing populism* across Europe in recent years show us clearly that what the well-known German social philosopher Jürgen Habermas has explicitly defined as a *European public sphere* or a European demos (Habermas 2001a) is in serious doubt or even real danger, especially from the specific sector of European political elites or electorates that would like to return to the historical era of protectionism and aggressive or chauvinistic nationalism, although at the same time there are many positive signs relating to hospitality (Makris 2015a: 177–194), liberal cosmopolitanism and globalization, as discussed by Marco Caselli and Guia Gilardoni in Chap. 1.

Taking all of this seriously, we could surmise that, on one hand, the global financial crisis of 2008 and, on the other hand, today's ongoing European migrant and, in particular, refugee crisis (especially the “Syrian affair” that has been occurring since 2011 due to the Syrian Civil War) have shown us in different unpleasant and, most of all, inhumane ways that *Euroscepticism in action* (anti-immigration protests, fences, big walls and violent behavior against refugees even from military or police forces, etc.) tends to become the dominant political, ideological and, in some cases, institutional and social attitude in the European states now. Peter Foster emphasizes that this xenophobic and racist Euroscepticism is “evident on both the Left and Right-wing fringes of Europe's increasingly fractured politics” (Foster 2016). Therefore, to put it differently, undoubtedly the main problem in the EU in our “dark times”—as the German-born Jewish political theorist Hannah Arendt would probably say, comparing current times to the European interwar period and especially the Weimar Republic (Arendt 1983: vii–x)—doesn't have to do with the fact that Eurosceptic and protest political parties that are against European civic and social solidarity are no longer single-issue parties; rather, it chiefly concerns the fact that they have sharply and sometimes violently

penetrated the European public sphere as de facto social, political, institutional and party actors by gradually shaping, as dominant opinion makers, the everyday life of the European agenda. Simon Usherwood calls attention to the fact that “the anti-EU information dissemination infrastructure across Europe is one of the most developed outside of government and academic circles. Moreover, anti-EU groups appear to have adopted a rational strategy of maximizing their limited resources to focus on policies and points in the policy cycle when they have the best opportunity to exercise some leverage. In this, they resemble other instances of social movements engaged in ‘contentious politics’” (Usherwood 2013: 291). In that sense, Mehlika Ozlem Ultan and Serdar Ornek summarize that “Nowadays, the Eurosceptics have political momentum” (Ozlem and Ornek 2015: 55).

The recent terrorist attacks by ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) in the heart of Europe (Paris, Brussels, Nice, etc.) have further empowered the huge wave of Euroscepticism, putting the deliberative, republican, transnational and cosmopolitan principles and goals of European political integration under a serious threat. As it looks in Alice Foster’s ‘terror attacks timeline’, this cynic kind of terrorism has shaken the Europe (Foster 2017). It is noteworthy that *terrorism* and Euroscepticism are two sides of the same European coin. In fact, the European public sphere is entrapped in a deadly position between Scylla and Charybdis. The refugee crisis and *Islamophobia* bring into focus the thorny question of anti-immigrant rhetoric from right-wing political parties. From this standpoint, Richard Wilke, Bruce Stokes and Katie Simmons conclusively write that:

[T]he recent surge of refugees into Europe has featured prominently in the anti-immigrant rhetoric of right-wing parties across the Continent and in the heated debate over the UK’s decision to exit the European Union. At the same time, attacks in Paris and Brussels have fueled public fears about terrorism. As a new Pew Research Center survey illustrates, the refugee crisis and the threat of terrorism are very much related to one another in the minds of many Europeans. In eight of the 10 European nations surveyed, half or more believe incoming refugees increase the likelihood of terrorism in their country. (Wilke et al. 2016)

In Habermas’s opinion, what is at stake concerns the shortcomings of capitalism and neoliberalism and not the refugee crisis and Islamophobia.

In fact, the German thinker sharply criticizes those Eurosceptics who suggest that the republican, transnational and cosmopolitan aspects of the EU are a threat to state sovereignty. By thoroughly exploring the Eurosceptic theses about the future of the nation-state within the context of EU, he points out that the weakening of state sovereignty is due to *neoliberal globalization* and not to the strong democratic demand for a European public space. To put it differently, Habermas claims that, in contrast to what is broadly believed, the EU as a new post-national republic is likely to save the historical institution of the modern state exactly like the post-war welfare state saved capitalism in the twentieth century. So, in contrast to those who perceive the EU as a political and legal process that undermines the democratic state, Habermas believes that *European political integration* will ultimately promote peoples' interests via deliberative practices and procedures. As we shall see in this chapter in more detail, this specific Habermasian point of view reconstructs the EU as a European *demos par excellence*, which must be established on the communicative and deliberative interactivity of European nations, organizations, peoples and most of all citizens (McCormick 2009: 212). In addition, for Habermas, Euroscepticism is hazardous to the extent that brings to the fore the inter-war specters of economical protectionism, atavistic chauvinism and aggressive nationalism that have greatly jeopardized the cultural origins of a quasi-European political identity, meaning, a fortiori, the republican, transnational and cosmopolitan principles of individual freedom, political equality and human rights as the fundamental ideals of Enlightenment. In this vein, Habermas is a truly Arendtian-inspired republican thinker who further supports the political project of a so-called European *post-national constellation* (Habermas 2001b) by vividly emphasizing that a European deliberative, republican, transnational and multicultural *demos* is not a result of an electoral aggregation of formal or normative preordained individual preferences but a specific democratic outcome through an open procedural deliberation of interacting speeches and deeds between active, free and equal citizens. It is no coincidence that he emphatically refers to Hannah Arendt's 1958 masterpiece *The Human Condition* in the following way: "I am indebted to this book, especially its model of the Greek public sphere, for essential stimuli for *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* which I was working on at the time" (Habermas 2015: 110).

Since the 1990s, Habermas has published several important articles and books which have explicitly posed the thorny question of European integration as a post-national republic by exploring in depth particular aspects of Europe, and especially the EU, within an analytical framework that extends from the Eurozone currency unification and enlargement of the EU state to the question of a *European constitution* (Habermas 1999: 105–127). Having reconsidered the political challenges and strategic opportunities of the globalization era so early, especially for the modern Westphalian-like, territorial, national and democratic state, Habermas has pointed out from the very beginning, and on any appropriate occasion, that what is really happening now is without a doubt that modern states are incorporated almost violently into this globalized financial economy rather than public economies being incorporated into states' territories and carried out in a democratic way. Taking this assumption as a starting point, Habermas posed the question of *European public space* in the twenty-first century in a paper published in the *New Left Review* in 2001 under the provocative title “Why Europe Needs a Constitution?” (Habermas 2001c: 5–26). It is important to note that Habermas's critical reflections, particularly in relation to the European refugee crisis, are not addressed to the Brussels elites but rather are aimed directly at *European civil society* in order to attract the ideological and political interest of the European people. His main objective is not centered just on the consequences of fiscal crisis but first and foremost on the increasing Eurosceptic behavior of citizens all around Europe. Euroscepticism deconstructs step by step the foundations of the EU. So, Habermas, by showing us the dangers of Europessimism, reveals the democratic alternative of a European political integration based on the project of a European demos (Grewal 2012).

From 'Volk' to Demos: Jürgen Habermas's Deliberative Theory of Democracy

In this vein, we could indisputably argue that the increasing Eurosceptic electoral, political and ideological *turn* in the last few years in the EU brings to light not only the critical issue of Euroscepticism, in close connection with the refugee crisis and Islamophobia, but simultaneously the

equally important issue of European political integration as an entire progressive project, mainly from a *constitutional* and *post-national* viewpoint (Cronin 2011: 196–221). Jürgen Habermas's *deliberative theory of democracy* is regarded as a basic philosophical approach against the crucial phenomenon of Euroscepticism, right-wing populism and Islamophobia. The famous historian Anson Rabinbach, in an article published in 2012, characterized the eminent German social philosopher and public intellectual Jürgen Habermas as *the good European*, apparently meaning that he is not only the last votary of a *European citizenship* in these obscure days of aggressive racism, offensive nationalism and sui generis state protectionism, but obviously that he is perhaps the only one amongst the great contemporary European political and ethical thinkers who remains eagerly optimistic in a Kantian- and Arendtian-like way of thinking about and acting in relation to the European republic as a constitutional, political, republican, transnational, multicultural and cosmopolitan public sphere (Rabinbach 2012). The Habermasian perspective brings to the fore the western ideals of tolerance, individual freedom, political equality and social egalitarianism as the key elements of a constitutional body politic or polity in general, which is defined as *demos* (Bray and Slaughter 2015: 101–102). In this section of the chapter I attempt to outline of European integration project in regard to the so-called Habermasian concept of the European public sphere or *European demos* as the political and institutional locus classicus not only of European social and civic solidarity but, first and foremost, as the starting point of a new kind of a democratic, post-national and transnational *citizenship* beyond the historical horizon of the modern state's biologically racist, totalitarian nationalistic, religiously fundamentalist and culturally imperialist political and ethical identities (Habermas 2015: 29–45; Arendt 2004).

“Therefore”, writes Habermas, “I suggest a [...] scenario of constitution-making, according to which the European peoples would participate together with the totality of the European citizens on an equal footing. This hypothetically assumed perspective reveals the innovative ways in which the European Union is already moving in the direction of a *transnational democracy* [emphasis added], as well as the reforms that would still have to be made in order to turn the existing Union into

a democracy” (Habermas 2015: 31). As far as Habermas is concerned (Habermas 1996a: 285), post-national, transnational or supranational democracy is a specific form of a *procedural* and *deliberative* political (and not moral with the sense of conventional ethics) community in which the decision-making procedure has an intrinsically rational and *discursive* character (Baynes 2016: 160–161). By coining, in his final analysis and in order to indicate a whole project relating to both Germany and Europe (Habermas 1990a: 207–267), an expression such as “the post-national constellation”, from the mid-1980s onwards (see especially the so-called “Historians’ debate” [*Historikerstreit*]), Habermas has considered the EU to be an institutional entity beyond the nationalistic structure of *Volk*, according to the purely political form of demos. “Habermas”, Lasse Thomassen points out:

[...] believes that the relevant unit for a political collective is not an ethnos but a demos. It is neither blood nor ethnicity, culture, religion or language that provides the glue of solidarity [emphasis added]. Habermas does not deny that these things may be important to many people, but he argues that, as far as the polity goes, they should not define the polity. Instead, the relevant collective is the demos—the people as a demos, that is, as a collective that defines itself through democratic process of which the opinion- and will-formation of the public sphere is an essential part. Democratic self-determination does not consist in the expression of an already existing, pre-political and ‘natural’ identity of the people, but in the active creation of the identity of people. ‘Citizens constitute themselves on their own as a political association of the free and equal’. (Thomassen 2010: 138–139)

In this Habermasian perspective, demos is not merely a normative question but, in Aristotelian, Kantian and Arendtian terms, a kind of *vita activa*, or in other words, a “politics through the agency of communicative action” (Habermas 2015: 110).

By rethinking the principles of Enlightenment, “which he sees as a still unfinished project to create a modern free and rational society” (Leach 2008: 181), within the frame of a linguistic and discursive approach which is defined by him as *ideal speech situation* (Fultner 2011: 63–65), Habermas obviously emphasizes the role of the democratic public sphere and values and, most of all, this specific category of democratic

political culture and citizenship, which is constructed on a deliberative procedure of *opinion- and will-formation* (Thomassen 2010: 140). The Habermasian concept of demos, especially at the EU level, must be explicitly conceived as a post-national and even transnational and supra-national political community of free and equal citizens who constantly take part in the procedural formation of a democratic public sphere beyond a blood- and race-based precondition of human life. From this standpoint, it is no coincidence that Habermas sees immigrants and even refugees as an integral part of the European demos insofar as “inclusion or exclusion of immigration cannot be based on ethical reasons” (Thomassen 2010: 142). It is noteworthy that since the beginning of 1990s, Habermas has obviously built a deliberative and procedural theory of European demos both against liberal and republican models of the western-like representative democracy. “In comparing”, he concludes, “the three models, I take my orientation from that dimension of politics which has been our primary concern, namely, the democratic opinion- and will-formation that issue in popular elections and parliamentary decrees” (Habermas 1998: 246). Geoffrey Stokes vehemently argues that this specific Habermasian view of linguistic, discursive and deliberative European demos and citizenship not only concerns the permanent residents of a city, a state or especially an interstate entity as the EU probably is, but first and foremost marginal residents such as refugees and asylum seekers. Therefore, this kind of radical discursive European demos “allows for the concepts and practices of transnational citizenship” (Stokes 2002: 40–41).

This Habermasian radical approach, which puts demos against ethnos, could probably be realized only if all members of a political society, without exclusions based, for example, on racial, national, religious or gender characteristics, have “an equal chance to participate in the discussion” about an Aristotelian-inspired common good (*εὖ ζῆν*). Nevertheless, there are no normative preconditions or preferences that are regarded as necessary presuppositions for the formation of a political community such as this. To put it another way, there are no such things as pre-existing ethical or moral *norms*. From this perspective, it is totally obvious that Jürgen Habermas gradually replaced the traditional or liberal subject-centered conception of political rationality and legitimacy with a clearly

communicative and deliberative model of *intersubjective action* (Habermas 1984: 366–399, 1989: 374–403, 1995: 294–326), which is “grounded in interactions *between* human subjects where the norms to govern society had yet to be constructed” (McLellan 2005: 295–296). Against both the private domain and national bureaucratic state as well as the capitalist market economy (Habermas 1994: 25–42), within an explicitly Arendtian-like historical and spiritual horizon, he constructs European demos as a discursive and, most of all, post-national civil society, in which free and equal citizens actively and in concert form, without moral, racial, ethnic or religious exclusions, various public opinions about their common interests and good (Olson 2011: 140–155).

However, this Habermasian distinction between political and moral elements of society does not mean that he devalues the ethical aspect of politics. In contrast to today’s widespread misunderstanding (Rehg 2011: 115–139), he proposes a so-called *discourse ethics*, which is, as a linguistic and communicative kind of ethics, quite a different ethical form than the ordinary or conventional normative morality. “In discourse ethics”, Patrick Baert writes with emphasis, “the grounding of normative claims requires dialogue” (Baert 2007: 130). So, discourse ethics entails an open dialogue between well-informed, free and equal people. From another point of view, we could metaphorically argue that discourse ethics “dislikes” any exclusion by definition. “The justification of norms and commands”, Habermas points out, “requires that a real discourse be carried out and thus cannot occur in a strictly monological form, i.e., in the form of a hypothetical process of argumentation occurring in the individual mind” (Habermas 1990b: 68). This Habermasian discourse ethics is apparently a kind of *political ethics* to the extent that everything is taking place in a democratic and interactive environment as an open deliberative procedure, where “individuals are encouraged to adopt the perspectives of all other individuals affected before deciding upon the validity of a given norm” (Baert 2007: 130). From this linguistic and communicative perspective, European demos is regarded as a *discursive democracy*, which is produced through a systematically *rational dialogue* among free and equal citizens (*homo rationalis*). As far as Jürgen Habermas is concerned, discursive democracy is an ideal speech situation in the sense that implies a democratic form of political society free from violence, power relations,

domination and, most of all, inequality (Adams and Dyson 2005: 233). Jacob Torfing points out that “Habermas tries to rescue the project of modernity by seeking to eliminate power in order to realize the ideal of a communicative rationality based on free, sincere and truth-seeking dialogue” (Torfing 2005: 158).

As is entirely clear, Habermasian deliberative politics go far beyond the strategic model of political power by building a procedural democratic model of communicative or discursive action that is oriented to *mutual rational consensus* and a “political process that promotes the search for reasoned agreement about the citizen’s common good” (Baynes 2005: 481). As mentioned earlier, Jürgen Habermas’s concept of European demos or, broadly speaking, global civil society is not merely a “two-track” model of a Kantian-inspired cosmopolitan democracy; rather, it is where a constitutional (or *strong*) public sphere, which is constituted from “international negotiating systems”, such as states, international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), coexists with an interactive (or *weak*) public sphere, in which citizens are “motivated by a cosmopolitan consciousness” and act “in various ways in a cosmopolitan civil society” (Baynes 2005: 493). “Taken together”, Ciaran Cronin points out:

this amounts to a ‘two track’ model of legitimation, with one path leading from cosmopolitan citizens via the international community of democratic states to the peace and human rights policy of the world organization, and a second, from national citizens via their nation-states (and regional alliances) to the transnational negotiation system, where both paths converge in the General Assembly of the world organization [or in the European Parliament in the mid-level of EU]. As the embodiment of the community of states and world citizens, the world organization would represent the unity of the global constitutional system [...] as a whole. (Cronin 2011: 212)

This Aristotelian-inspired “global governance without a world government” (Cronin 2011: 205) is without a doubt an interactive procedure of a *constitutionalization* of post-national and even transnational demos in different political stages (peoples, states, organizations and, above all, citi-

zens), which is ultimately defined by Habermas as a *political constitution for a pluralist world society* (Habermas 2012a: 267–288).

In 2011 (2012 in English), Jürgen Habermas published an important book on the EU crisis with an introductory chapter about constitutionalization of international law and especially of the EU itself (Habermas 2012b: 1–70). In this book, he shows why and how Europe could be conceived as an entire constitutional project in the sense of this “two-track” model of democratic legitimation. According to this approach, the EU—actually, the two fundamental ontological subjects of Europe, that is, the European peoples and European citizens—should, sooner or later, choose between the current bureaucratic model of *post-democratic executive federalism*, where the political and financial powers are concentrated on the European Council, Commission and European Central Bank, forming a kind of new “Holy Alliance” (Habermas 2015: 33), and the model of *transnational democracy*, meaning a genuine European democratic community where a “balance between the competences of the Council and the Parliament must be achieved in all fields of policy” (Habermas 2012b: 43). This deliberative and discursive constitutionalization of the EU as a whole political project in the future presupposes the transnationalization of the elections to the European Parliament, a unified electoral law and the Europeanization of the existing party system. “The main challenge at the institutional level”, Habermas maintains, “[...] is to recover the equal standing and symmetric relation in the distribution of functions and legislative competences which we ascribe reconstructively to the European peoples and EU citizens as constitution-founding subjects” (Habermas 2012b: 43).

Undoubtedly, Habermas here explicitly poses the crucial question of a procedural construction of a post-national and, in the last analysis, transnational and cosmopolitan European identity as a structural factor for EU political integration in the future (Habermas 2012b: 53–70). According to him, what is at stake is the development of a totally new constitutional project of European political unification which would be regarded from the very beginning as a communicative and deliberative building process of a European demos beyond national borders and against this absolutely non-democratic bureaucratic model of executive federalism. From an Arendtian point of view, Jürgen Habermas strongly

believes that a deeper European political integration must be perceived as a risky shift in the balance between politics and neoliberal markets. “Politics”, he writes with emphasis, “is the only means by which democratic citizens can *intentionally* influence the fate and social bases of existence of their communities through collective action” (Habermas 2015: 81). So, as we have clearly seen here, from this Aristotelian-like perspective, the question of a republican, transnational, multicultural and cosmopolitan European demos primarily concerns these specific Habermasian principles of ideal speech situation and communicative action, that is, the so-called *discourse principle*: “Just those norms are valid to which all those possibly affected could agree as participants in rational discourses” (Rehg 2011: 120). This should be fulfilled in a new EU public sphere in such a way that democratic and cosmopolitan citizenship will be able to realize the principle of European social and civic solidarity efficiently through ideal speech deliberations and mutual promises. Using Arendtian terms, we could define European demos from Habermas’s viewpoint as follows: a “*mutual contract* [emphasis added] by which people bind themselves together in order to form a community”, which “is based on reciprocity and presupposes equality; its actual content is a promise, and its result is indeed a ‘society’ [...] in the old Roman sense of *societas*, which means alliance. Such an alliance gathers together the isolated strength of the allied partners and binds them into a new power structure by virtue of ‘free and sincere promises’” (Arendt 1985: 170).

Constitutional Patriotism, Civic Solidarity and European Citizenship

In the mid-1980s, within the frame of the “Historians’ debate” (*Historikerstreit*) in the Federal Republic of Germany, mainly concerning the question of German guilt regarding the Holocaust and especially Germany’s ideological orientation to a post-Totalitarian identity (Habermas 1990a: 249–267), Habermas “developed a form of patriotism focused not so much on historical identities, as on rights and democratic procedures” (Müller 2006: 288). In fact, the Habermasian notion of *constitutional patriotism* was a communicative reflexivity on the thorny ques-

tion of European aggressive nationalism. To put the matter differently, the notion of constitutional patriotism was Habermas's terminus a quo in order to strongly respond to exclusion from the public space. "Constitutional patriotism", Jan-Werner Müller writes, ensures "some form of political integration, but without the illiberal aspirations of cultural wholeness" and also attempts "to make room for contestation, dissent and even civil disobedience, but with the proviso that these have to use a shared (even if always contestable) political vocabulary" (Müller 2012: 1928). In accordance with a *European constitutional patriotism*, Müller argues that it "might do two things: protect a shared European understanding of democracy *and* promote the values specific to the EU" (Müller 2012: 1935). Therefore, constitutional patriotism could be regarded as a discursive model of radical democracy that is based on a reasonable justification of citizens' preferences and decisions regarding their constitution (Makris 2015b). It assumes that citizens perceive the constitutional norms, via reasonable and deliberative argumentations, as the political metonymy of their legal and moral values (discourse ethics). From this point of view, constitutional patriotism must be regarded as an innovative form of a post-national and even transnational type of *European constitutional political culture* (Olson 2011: 150–152).

At the heart of European constitutional patriotism is the principle of social and civic *solidarity* (Cronin 2011: 216). In the beginning of the 1990s, Jürgen Habermas delivered a lecture on the theme of "Euroskepticism, Market Europe, or a Europe of (World) Citizens?", where he posed the question of solidarity. "Civic solidarity", he points out, "which has hitherto been limited to the nation-state, will have to be widened to encompass all citizens of the Union, so that [...] [they] will be ready to vouch for one another" (Habermas 2006: 87). The problem of European social and civic solidarity constitutes the hard core of this Habermasian political project of a European constitutional patriotism in the sense of a post-national, transnational and cosmopolitan European identity. By underlying the discursive dimensions of a mixed political subject, which is defined as European demos, the German philosopher is likely to bring to focus the question of solidarity through the active participation of people and citizens in a European public space that is constituted by free and equal individual and collective actors. Solidarity and

demos are the two sides of the same coin. Demos realizes solidarity and vice versa. This is exactly what Habermas defines as the political structure of *democratic solidarity* among racial, nationalistic, religious and cultural strangers (Habermas 2006: 87), which is not a result of a common language, common history or common tradition, but a deliberative outcome of an Arendtian-like *acting in concert* in the daily social and political *lifeworld*. As already mentioned earlier, this is not a normative political ethos but the procedural and active result of a thick web of political speeches and deeds, which take place via a linguistic democratic process that is formed in a totally new European constitutional public space, where peoples and citizens, even when they are coming from such different national, religious and cultural contexts, *think, act and judge* in concert (Arendt 1978). “Explicitly building on Arendt’s famous demarcation of power from violence”, William E. Scheuerman writes, “Habermas describes civil society as the prime generator of what he calls ‘communicative power’, according to which deliberation and action in concert are essential for understanding the *origins* of political power” (Scheuerman 1999: 157).

According to Habermas, European demos, constitutional patriotism and solidarity as a whole political project set the foundations for a novel form of post-national and transnational active citizenship, which has been defined since the early 1990s as a *European citizenship* (Habermas 1996b: 20–35). “Only if such an interplay between institutionalized processes of opinion and will formation and those informal networks of public communication occurs can citizen today mean anything more than an aggregation of pre-political individual interests and the passive enjoyment of rights bestowed upon the individual by the paternalistic authority of the state” (Habermas 1996b: 32). Habermas does not hesitate to speak about a European constitutional patriotism as the metonymy of European citizenship (Habermas 1996b: 33–34). So, European citizenship could be conceived as the ultimate step of the “Historians’ debate”. It is worth noting that Anson Rabinbach argues that the concept of European constitutional patriotism has from the beginning been that specific Habermasian theoretical, political and ideological argument about the reorientation of post-war Germany towards the democratic and deliberative traditions of modernity: a republican antidote to the

aggressive Prussian nationalism and racist Pan-Germanic chauvinism (*Sonderweg*) that catastrophically influenced the German political history from the nineteenth to the twentieth century (Rabinbach 2012). Habermas claims that while Germany's political unification in 1990 should have been experienced by the German elites as a result of a *reconciliation* process of the German people with their European neighbors, it ultimately caused significant political changes to the German national grand strategy, turning German foreign policy towards a strong *national egocentricity* (Habermas 2012b: 132–134). In an article published in 2013 in *Spiegel* magazine, the German philosopher harshly criticizes German Chancellor Angela Merkel and the German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble by pointing out that this new model of German nationalistic *hegemonism* puts into serious question the entire process of European political integration: “Europe is in a state of emergency [...] Germany isn't dancing. It's dozing on a volcano” (Habermas 2013a).

On 26 April 2013, Jürgen Habermas delivered a speech at the KU Leuven, in which he further clarified and specified his basic theses about the EU. His point of departure is his belief that in Europe now there is a *hiatus* between the opinions of the European peoples and citizens and the decision-making process by the highest level of European political and technocratic elites in Brussels. This *democratic deficit* explains exactly the reason why the political concept of the EU as a “post-national constellation” remains an unachievable utopia for all of the democratic individual and collective subjects in Europe. “This also explains”, Habermas writes:

why conceptions of the European Union and ideas of its future development have remained diffuse among the general population. Informed opinions and articulated positions are for the most part the monopoly of professional politicians, economic elites, and scholars with relevant interests; not even public intellectuals who generally participate in debates on burning issues have made this issue their own. What unite the European citizens today are the Eurosceptical mindsets that have become more pronounced in all of the member countries during the crisis, albeit in each country for different and rather polarizing reasons. (Habermas 2013b)

According to Habermas, “under the pull of this technocratic dynamic, the European Union would approach the dubious ideal of a *market-*

conforming democracy [emphasis added] that would be even more helplessly exposed to the imperatives of the markets because it lacked an anchor in a politically irritable and excitable civil society. Instead, the steering capacities which are lacking at present, though they are functionally necessary for any monetary union, could and should be centralized only within the framework of an *equally supranational and democratic political community* [emphasis added]" (Habermas 2013b).

Concluding Remarks

Habermas's European project, as an alternative to the current *executive federalism*, is a step towards a *post-national discursive democracy*, which should not be necessarily perceived as a transition towards a "United States of Europe". This dilemma, he points out, between a confederation and a federal state is false. Nation-states could preserve their integrity as national sovereign structures within a supranational democracy, without losing their role as *depositaries* of political freedoms. This, in practice, implies the formation of a European party system, in the sense that the process of decision-making would take place in the European Parliament, which would be established on interests structured along national borders. The critical point, Habermas supports, lies on European solidarity. In other words, he concludes:

The leadership role that falls to Germany today for demographic and economic reasons is not only awakening historical ghosts all around us but also tempts us to choose a unilateral national course, or even to succumb to power fantasies of a 'German Europe' instead of a 'Germany in Europe'. We Germans should have learned from the catastrophes of the first half of the twentieth century that it is in our national interest to avoid permanently the dilemma of a semi-hegemonic status that can hardly be held up without sliding into conflicts. Helmut Kohl's achievement is not the reunification and the reestablishment of a certain national normality per se, but the fact that this happy event was coupled with the consistent promotion of a policy that binds Germany tightly into Europe. (Habermas 2013b)

Europe (the EU), as Habermas strongly argues, can survive only as a political project of solidarity and *fraternité*. From this Habermasian perspective, if European demos is a political vision of a new republican foundation between national, religious and cultural *strangers*, then obviously it could be performed only as a project of a multicultural and cosmopolitan Europe in this era of globalization and refugee crisis. So, the Habermasian ideal of European demos could be conceived today as a systematic theoretical effort to understand more and more the democratic power of discursive, deliberative and inclusive political communities in order to handle sufficiently the increasing problems of migration and the refugee crisis not only in the EU and Europe but all over the world, as Marco Caselli and Guia Gilardoni have shown in a detailed way in the introduction of this book (Chap. 1). In that specific sense, European constitutional patriotism and citizenship could take the place of nationalism by binding together a democratic community among strangers. This new kind of social and civic solidarity could be a locus classicus of a new post-national republic; in other words, a new model of cosmopolitan citizenship in a definitely globalized world (Bray and Slaughter 2015: 101–102). Needless to say, the strong rising of the Habermasian *problématique* of European identity politics as a crucial question of a republican, transnational and cosmopolitan European public space in the twenty-first century has already taken an important position in the broad academic and political dialogue now, mainly due to the appearance of a new type of German nationalism and hegemonism which geopolitically seems to undermine the post-war European state solidarity as an integral component of the contractual spirit of Europe's political integration. This is probably the reason why Peter E. Gordon points out that Habermas has for more than six decades played “the part of *gadfly* [emphasis added] in modern Germany, just as Socrates did in ancient Athens” (Gordon 2016). Hence, it is no coincidence that Stefan Müller-Doohm, Habermas's biographer, points out that the German philosopher is the personification of *homo politicus* to the extent that “he always saw himself as an active participant in the social and political process” (Müller-Doohm 2016: 2).

Notes

1. *The Rise of Eurosceptic Right-Wing Parties and the 2014 European Parliament Elections*, www.mhpc.com

References

- Adams, I., & Dyson, R. W. (2005). *Fifty major political thinkers*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Arendt, H. (1978). *The life of the mind*. San Diego, New York and London: A Harvest Book, Harcourt Brace & Company.
- Arendt, H. (1983). *Men in dark times*. San Diego, New York and London: A Harvest Book, Harcourt Brace & Company.
- Arendt, H. (1985). *On revolution*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Arendt, H. (2004). *The origins of totalitarianism*. New York: Schocken Books.
- Baert, P. (2007). Jürgen Habermas. In J. Scott (Ed.), *Fifty key sociologists. The contemporary theorists*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Baynes, K. (2005). Habermas. In D. Boucher & P. Kelly (Eds.), *Political thinkers. From Socrates to the present*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Baynes, K. (2016). *Habermas*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Bray, D., & Slaughter, S. (2015). *Global democratic theory. A critical introduction*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Cronin, C. (2011). Cosmopolitan democracy. In B. Fultner (Ed.), *Jürgen Habermas. Key concepts*. Durham: Acumen.
- Foster, A. (2017). Terror attacks timeline: From Paris and Brussels terror to most recent attacks in Europe. *Sunday Express*. Retrieved from <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/693421/Terror-attacks-timeline-France-Brussels-Europe-ISIS-killings-Germany-dates-terrorism>
- Foster, P. (2016). It's not just the Brits: Euroscepticism on the rise all across the Europe, major survey shows. *The Telegraph*. Retrieved from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/07/its-not-just-the-brits-euroscepticism-on-the-rise-all-across-eur/>
- Fultner, B. (2011). Communicative action and formal pragmatics. In B. Fultner (Ed.), *Jürgen Habermas. Key concepts*. Durham: Acumen.
- Gordon, P. E. (2016). A lion in winter. *The Nation*. Retrieved from <https://www.thenation.com/article/a-lion-in-winter/>

- Grewal, S. (2012). *Habermas and European integration. Social and cultural modernity beyond the nation-state*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Habermas, J. (1984). *The theory of communicative action. Volume one. Reason and the realization of society*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Habermas, J. (1989). *The theory of communicative action. Volume two. Lifeworld and system: A critique of functionalist reason*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Habermas, J. (1990a). *The new conservatism. Cultural criticism and the historians' debate*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Habermas, J. (1990b). *Moral consciousness and communicative action*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Habermas, J. (1994). *Knowledge & human interests*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Habermas, J. (1995). *The philosophical discourse of modernity. Twelve lectures*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Habermas, J. (1996a). *Between facts and norms: Contributions to a discourse theory of law and democracy*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Habermas, J. (1996b). Citizenship and national identity. In V. van Steenberg (Ed.), *The condition of citizenship*. London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Habermas, J. (1998). *The inclusion of the other. Studies in political theory*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Habermas, J. (1999). The European nation-state: On the past and future of sovereignty and citizenship. In C. Cronin & P. de Greiff (Eds.), *The inclusion of the other. Studies in political theory*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Habermas, J. (2001a). *The structural transformation of the public sphere. An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Habermas, J. (2001b). *The postnational constellation*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Habermas, J. (2001c). Why Europe needs a constitution. *New Left Review*, 11.
- Habermas, J. (2006). *Time of transitions*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Habermas, J. (2012a). A political constitution for the pluralist world society? In G. W. Brown & D. Held (Eds.), *The cosmopolitanism reader*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Habermas, J. (2012b). *The crisis of the European Union. A response*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Habermas, J. (2013a). Merkel's European failure: Germany dozes on a volcano. *Spiegel on Line*. Retrieved from <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/juergen-habermas-merkel-needs-to-confront-real-european-reform-a-915244.html>

- Habermas, J. (2013b). Democracy, solidarity and the European crisis. *Pro Europa*. Retrieved from <http://www.pro-europa.eu/index.php/en/at-issue/european-identity/11-j%C3%BCrgen-habermas-democracy,-solidarity-and-the-european-crisis>
- Habermas, J. (2015). *The lure of technocracy*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Leach, R. (2008). *The politics companion*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Makris, S. (2015a). Jacques Derrida and the case of cosmopolitanism: 'Cities of refuge' in the twenty-first century. In D. O'Byrne & S. De La Rosa (Eds.), *The cosmopolitan ideal. Challenges and opportunities*. London: Rowman & Littlefield International, Ltd.
- Makris, S. (2015b). Discourses of revolutionary subject in contemporary Marxism. Critical reflections through Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's oeuvre. *Theoria & Praxis. International Journal of Interdisciplinary Thought*, 3(1), 1–10.
- McCormick, J. P. (2009). *Weber, Habermas, and traformations of the European state. Constitutional, social and supranational democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McLellan, D. (2005). Western Marxism. In T. Ball & R. Bellamy (Eds.), *Twentieth-century political thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Müller, J.-W. (2006). On the origins of constitutional patriotism. *Contemporary Political Theory*, 5, 278–296.
- Müller, J.-W. (2012). Constitutional patriotism beyond the nation-state: Human rights, constitutional necessity, and the limits of pluralism. *Cardozo Law Review*, 33(5), 1923–1935.
- Müller-Doohm, S. (2016). *Habermas. A biography*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Nathan, A. (2013). *The rise of the Eurosceptics and the 2014 EP elections*. Retrieved from www.policyreview.eu
- Olson, K. (2011). Deliberative democracy. In B. Fultner (Ed.), *Jürgen Habermas. Key concepts*. Durham: Acumen.
- Ozlem, U. M., & Ornek, S. (2015). Euroscepticism in the European Union. *International Journal of Social Sciences*, IV(2), 49–57.
- Rabinbach, A. (2012). Good European: On Jürgen Habermas. *The Nation*. Retrieved from <https://www.thenation.com/article/good-european-juergen-habermas/>
- Rehg, W. (2011). Discourse ethics. In B. Fultner (Ed.), *Jürgen Habermas. Key concepts*. Durham: Acumen.

- Scheuerman, W. E. (1999). Between radicalism and resignation: Democratic theory in Habermas's *between facts and norms*. In P. Dews (Ed.), *Habermas: A critical reader*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Stokes, G. (2002). Democracy and citizenship. In A. Carter & G. Stokes (Eds.), *Democratic theory today*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- The rise of eurosceptic right-wing parties and the 2014 European parliament elections..* Retrieved from www.mhpc.com
- Thomassen, L. (2010). *Habermas. A guide for the perplexed*. London: Continuum.
- Torfinn, J. (2005). Poststructuralist discourse theory: Foucault, Laclau, Mouffe, and Žižek. In T. Janoski et al. (Eds.), *The handbook of political sociology. States, civil societies and globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Usherwood, S. (2013). The shifting focus of opposition to the European Union. *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, 9(2), 279–296.
- Wilke, R., Stokes, B., and Simmons K. (2016). Europeans fear wave of refugees will mean more terrorism, fewer jobs. Sharp ideological divides across EU on views about minorities, diversity and national identity. *PewResearch Center. Global Attitudes & Trends*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewglobal.org/2016/07/11/europeans-fear-wave-of-refugees-will-mean-more-terrorism-fewer-jobs/>

Spiros Makris is Assistant Professor in Political Theory at the University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece and Research Fellow at the Academy of Athens, Greece. In addition to his many books in Greek, his publications in English include, inter alia: “Discontent, But Also Blind? Understanding the Discipline of International Relations in Greece”, *Hellenic Studies*, Volume 16, No. 1, Spring 2008, pp. 155–180; *Hegemonism. American Foreign Policy and International Society. Alternative Perspectives*, Bruxelles: Établissements Emile Bruylant, S. A., 2010 (Monograph); “Jacques Derrida and the Case of Cosmopolitanism: ‘Cities of Refuge’ in the Twenty-First Century” In Darren O’Byrne and Sybille De La Rosa (eds), *The Cosmopolitan Ideal. Challenges and Opportunities*, London: Rowman & Littlefield International, Ltd., 2015, pp. 177–194; “Discourses of Revolutionary Subject in Contemporary Marxism. Critical Reflections through Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe’s Oeuvre, *Theoria & Praxis. International Journal of Interdisciplinary Thought*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2015, pp. 1–10; and “Balance of Power and Democratic Peace vs. Hegemonism. Demosthene’s Grotian Realism in the Post-Cold War Perspective”, *Annuaire International Des Droits De L’ Homme*, Volume VIII, 2014, Issy-les-Moulineaux Cedex, Paris: L.G.D.J. lextensoéditions, 2016, pp. 679–705. Email: smakris@uom.gr