Volume 24 Issue 1
Originally issued as C1



Global Journal of human-social science: C
Sociology & Culture
Volume 24 Issue 1 Version 1.0 Year 2024
Type: Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal
Publisher: Global Journals
Online ISSN: 2249-460X & Print ISSN: 0975-587X

From Nations to the European Union: A New Emerging Type of Society

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Keywords: *European union, nation, diversity, marcel mauss.*

GJHSS-C Classification: *LCC: HM*



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From Nations to the European Union: A New Emerging Type of Society

Julio Lopes

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In varietate concordia ([1])

This concept of the need for interlocking subgroups applies to our societies [...] it is necessary to create many subgroups, to constantly reinforce others [...] in short, to let them adjust to each other, naturally, if possible, under the authority of the state in case of need, according to its knowledge and under its control, in any case. Marcel Mauss, 1934. ([2])

I. Introduction

Marcel Mauss (1872-1950) classified societies into increasing levels of collective integration: the polysegmental with distinct closed groups; the tribal that is synthesized in family clans; the amorphous or kingdom, whose diffuse integration depends on an extrinsic central power; the national or nation, whose generalized integration comes from internal differences (even if their magnitudes were relevant) due to the adherence of all members to an intrinsic political center (Mauss, 2017, p.63-70) ([3]).

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"We understand a nation to be a materially and morally integrated society, with a stable, permanent central power, defined borders, relative moral, mental and cultural unity of the inhabitants, who consciously adhere to the state and its laws." Nationally integrated, its members individuate themselves by integrating directly and independently of segregation, implying impersonal benefaction through generalized trust in the single currency ("[...] a unity in which there is even a belief in national credit") and in general law ("The notion of homeland symbolizes the totality of the rights [...] that the member of this nation has in correlation with the duties that he must fulfill in it") (Mauss, 2017, p.77-79).

The individualization of members of national societies is the primary effect of the establishment of direct relationships between each individual and the entire social community, making its members directly dependent on it (more than on any other internal or external group), as far as it goes. to be endowed with a specific collective identity that contrasts with other nations. As self-centered societies, their generalized integration entails the individuation of each member and that of the entire group, which becomes the bearer of a specific (national) cultural character to the extent that nations are culturally equivalent to collective individuals. The national (uniform) and the international (diverse) overlap: "All this means that the way a Frenchman walks is less like the way an Englishman walks than the way an Algonquin walks is like a Californian Indian" (Mauss, 2017, p.81).

The intrinsic diversity of internationality (relations between nations) could lead to various possibilities, among which the following should be highlighted:

- Armaments cooperation between nations and capitals (for obviously warlike purposes, as during the military conflagration of 1914-1918) or "war capitalism" (Mauss, 2017, p.244-245);
- Integration between nations (regional blocs), independent of cosmopolitan capital and absorbing its movements (Mauss, 2017, p.234-240).

In this sense, the objective of this article is to investigate the second possibility of international integration - suggested above by Mauss - to ascertain how its contemporary intensification of the confluence of European nations leads to the progressive emergence

[1] EU (2000).
[2] Mauss (2015, p.350).
[3] According to Mauss, societies are polysegmental (or structured by diverse segments in profusion) when their members relate only through the subgroups to which they originally belong; they are tribal when their members relate through direct horizontal contacts between family groups in which they are found; they are dynastic (or kingdoms) when their members relate, fundamentally, through direct vertical interactions between family groups defined by ancestral collective debts; and they are national (or nations) to the extent that society itself establishes direct relationships with each of its members, even overriding any subgroups in which they are found (Mauss, 2000, p.63-70).

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of another type of society, even more integrated than nations, and detect its main characteristics. Namely, the types of reciprocity between its members (individual and collective) and whose operability is fundamental for any other supranational unions that may be attempted or established on other regions of the planet.

II. From Peace to the European Union

The path of the regional economic bloc as an alternative to international war cooperation, particularly in Europe, began in May 9 1950 (after the death of Mauss in February who did not experience this European transformation).

National leaders - including French Minister Robert Schumann - began to articulate markets on the continent, particularly for the main industrial inputs of the time (coal and steel), progressively attracting European nations to continental economic interdependence and whose expanded reproduction was ensured, from 1957, through a European Economic Community (EU, 2016a, p 3-4).

After 35 years of various bureaucratic improvements in its international continental course, economic unity led to the emergence of a supranational entity: the European Union. The EU was created through the pooling of national sovereignties by which nations delegate their institutional competencies in certain areas to institutions above them. In this sense, it also became an institutional space in which European borders would no longer limit the full mobility of goods and citizens between the constituent nations (EU, 2016b, p.3-4).

Since its inception, therefore, European international integration surpasses the constituent nations, in particular through the subsidiarity of the Union, when its intervention is appropriate even in areas that are still national and also through member claims for possible violation of common values (EU, 2016b, p.6-7). As this integration began to be carried out directly by institutions overlapping with national ones, its integrative dynamic gained momentum, as was the case (although not all EU members have adopted it yet) with monetary unification through the common currency, the euro, introduced in 1999 (EU, 2016a, p.5).

Today, it is made up, after the recent departure of the United Kingdom (Soares, 2019), of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden (EU, 2016b, p.3). The exceptional nature of the British exit (*Brexit*) contrasts with its continuous enlargements since the emergence of the Union, which suffered its first historic defection from an acceding member state (EU, 2016a, p.4).

Institutionally, the European Union contains a wide range of supranational bodies, including a Parliament, two Councils, and an Executive Commission responsible for conveying the will of the Union, comprising the Central Bank, an *Ombudsman* for European public services, the Court of Auditors, the Regional and Economic and Social Committees and the Court of Justice. It also had a Data Protection Authority, an Investment Bank, and 46 other agencies throughout the unified territory in 2014 (EU, 2016a).

The composition of EU's four fundamental institutions (Parliament, two Councils, and Commission) are two-dimensional: permeated both by a confederative dimension of equivalent national sovereignties among its members and according to the logic proper to confederations of independent states (Hamilton, 2003, p.108-110), and by a unitary dimension of the European population covered and according to the logic proper to popular sovereignty as general will (Rousseau, 1999). However, both dimensions are supranational and derive from the congregation of the nations of the Union.

The European Parliament is the institutional custodian of the unitary dimension of the population covered, as it is made up of representatives whose election expresses each population share of the EU's member nations, and its parliamentary control is exercised over the other supranational institutions (EU, 2019a, p.9-10).

The two Councils are the primary custodians of the confederate dimension between nations that is still presented by the EU as:

- The Council (as it is called) comprises ministerial representatives from the governments of the corresponding nations and is responsible for coordinating national policies and concluding international agreements outside the bloc. Operating under ten separate inter-ministerial configurations (foreign affairs; general; economic and financial; justice and home affairs; employment, social policy, health, and consumers; competitiveness; transport, telecommunications, and energy; agriculture and fisheries; environment; education, youth, culture, and sport), the participating ministers bind their national governments in the collegiate decisions (EU 2019a, p.16);
- The European Council comprises the top national leaders within the EU and is responsible for defining supranational political priorities. Usually operating unanimously, its remit is to formulate the general political direction of the EU at regular summits (EU 2019a, p.14).

The institutional balance between the two supranational dimensions (unitary and confederative) is ensured by legislative parity between the Parliament and the Council, as the legal formulation of the EU comes from shared decision-making between the two

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institutions, through alternating consultations or eventually scheduled conciliations, and by the European Commission itself, as the executive body of the proposals approved by them and which is also responsible for proposing them *simultaneously to both* (EU, 2019a, p.8). With members from EU nations, its composition (EU, 2019a, p.22) comes from:

- Initiative of national governments to propose a possible President whose consultations and choices define the rest of the executive collegiate;
- Parliamentary ratification of the collegiate body after the examination of each member by the European Parliament.

However, although both supranational dimensions are included in the current structure of the EU, the preponderance of the unitary dimension was already tending to be corroborated by the subjection of the other institutions to parliamentary control, including as the sole decision-making body in the event of political resignation by the European Commission (EU 2019b, p.14; Rousseau, 1999, p.187), as well as being extended, since 2014, by the adoption of the double decision-making majority in the Council, as it is now qualified by quorums relative to the Member States (55%) and also to the EU population (65%), as well as allowing a minimum of four Member States, provided they bring together at least 35% of the EU population, with the necessary majority to block institutional decisions. Also, since 2014, the executive composition of the EU (whose general interest it is politically responsible for synthesizing) has had its commissioners from 2/3 of the unified European nations (EU, 2019a, p.18).

III. Indirect Reciprocity in the European Union

National integrations group together through direct reciprocity between the entire group and its members, whose intersection consists of reciprocal rights and duties between the two poles of society: "First of all, there can be no nation without a certain integration of society, that is, it must have abolished all segmentation by clans, cities, tribes, kingdoms, feudal domains. [...] This integrated society exists within well-defined borders; it does not include independent frontier towns, enclaves, or foreign zones of influence" (Mauss, 2017, p.74).

Even between nations, their relations tend, due to the national society itself - which did not occur with other types of society - constituted as a collective individual in the face of others (as distinct nations), to the multiplication of direct contacts that reiterate their specificities and, therefore also to multilateralism as a maximum of direct international reciprocity: "They see, know and hear. [...] They form a sensitive, nervous milieu, and such a milieu is constant, more solid and more alive in peace than in war [...] (Mauss, 2017, p.124)".

However, in addition to direct reciprocity, there are other forms of reciprocity whose exercise guides international relations within the European Union, particularly between its constituent nations.

In this sense, indirect is the reciprocity in which the retribution of what is received *only reaches the giver when directed to someone else*. It can therefore be:

- Simple, when the non-giver to be reciprocated, by the one who receives something, is already predetermined by a previous bond with the giver: "Simple indirect reciprocity is found [...] in the case of an alliance [...]. It is a matter of cutting in a different direction from a single mass [...]. Oppositions cross cohesions (Mauss, 2015, p.345)". There is simple indirect reciprocity as long as the reciprocator has no choice as to who should reciprocate, because whoever benefited him already has a previous debt to someone else. All the retribution that is directed to those who have not benefited us directly, but that are intrinsically linked to those who have benefited us;
- Alternative, when the non-donor to be reciprocated, by the one who receives something, is not predetermined by a previous link with the donor, but to a substitute chosen by the reciprocator, as in generational successions, in general: "Normally, I cannot reciprocate [...] what he did to me; all I could do would be to reciprocate (once) to another the [...] I received. [...] That's what I call alternative indirect reciprocity" (Mauss, 2015, p.345). There is alternative indirect reciprocity when we must choose which of the beneficiaries of those who benefit us we will benefit in order to repay those who have benefited us directly.

We find such modes of reciprocity, rather than direct reciprocity, between the Union and its constituent nations, Member States, in European integration. Namely, simple indirect reciprocity in the exercise of exclusive and complementary competencies by the Union; and alternative indirect reciprocity in the exercise of shared (legislative) competencies between the Union and the Member States.

In this sense, *the topics listed show the mutual synergy that can* be seen between the two constituent parts of the European Union:

- *Simple indirect reciprocity:* Relations between society as a whole and its constituent sub-groups (competences of the Union that exclude or complement its parts);
- *Alternative direct reciprocity:* Simultaneous relations of European individuals with the unified society as a whole and its constituent sub-groups (legislative

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competences shared between the Member States and the Union – which are concomitant for any individual).

The Union legislative competencies (legal formulation and other legal ties) are exclusive of nations in customs union; establishment of the competition rules necessary for the functioning of the internal market; monetary policy for Member States whose currency is the euro; conservation of the sea's biological resources, within the framework of the common fisheries policy; and common commercial policy (EU, 2019a, p.5). Independent of national legislation, these are customs, competition, monetary, fishing, and commercial synergies between all the Member States, the exercise of which consists of *national* contributions to *Community* economic development through *simple* indirect reciprocity (because it is mediated by the Union and because it *is intrinsic to the prefixed condition of being* a Member State or possibly also adopting the euro as national currency) within the framework of the European Union.

The Union executive competencies (concrete support actions) are complementary or assistive to nations in protecting and improving human health, industry, culture, tourism, education, vocational training, youth and sport, civil protection, and administrative cooperation (EU, 2019a, p.6-7). These are issues that are intrinsic to the national integrity of the specific Member States and, therefore, each supplement carried out by the Union is a contribution to the beneficiary nation. It consists of simple indirect reciprocity between them, since its national benefit *implies its extension to the other Member States with the same* possible *vulnerability* and whose overcoming *also benefits the Union*. The common foreign and security policy (EU, 2019a, p.4) should also be seen as a gift from the Union to the constituent nations, as well as scientific research and humanitarian aid (although both are not substitutes for the Member States and under the same simple indirect reciprocity).

The Union legislative competencies (legal formulation and other legal links) are shared with nations in the internal market; social policy, concerning the aspects defined in this Treaty; economic, social and territorial cohesion; agriculture and fisheries, with the exception of the conservation of the sea's biological resources; the environment; consumer protection; transport; trans-European networks; energy; the area of freedom, security and justice; common safety problems in the field of public health, with regard to the aspects defined in this Treaty (EU, 2019a, p.5-6). The Laws of the Union override national laws (of each member country) on all the issues it shares with its members. The latter only have the full capacity to legislate on issues shared with the Union *when there are no laws on the subject* (Negrut, 2014).

These are the issues of general (*european*) citizenship within the unitary bloc and for whose regulation the respective national contributions are expected through *alternative* indirect reciprocity, since the national regulatory space is formulated by *the* Union, *which is indirectly reciprocated by the Member State*, as each specific piece of legislation on *these issues* benefits all European citizens and not just nationals.

The following table summarizes the indirect reciprocities that constitute european unification.

Table 1: European institutionalization of its indirect reciprocities.

European indirect reciprocities	EU institutional competences
Indirect Simple	Exclusive or complementary to nations
Indirect Alternative	Shared with their nations

IV. A Diversified Community

The international relations of indirect reciprocity within the European Union provide a sociability that is distinct from that which characterizes a nation, since it is a transversal integration whose collectivity is constituted through the internal subgroups - namely, the integrated nations - and despite of or independent of them (as happens in national integrations). Strictly speaking, the current Union is *another type of society,* distinct from any nation, since *it is a complex of subgroups articulated by indirect reciprocities* between themselves.

The transversality characteristic of sociability, emerging in contemporary times, has been highlighted by some sociologists, either as a result of economic globalization since the end of the 20th century (Castells, 1999), or as its underlying cause (Maffessoli, 2006, Lopes, 2017). According to Castells' globalizing bias, Maffesoli's neotribalizing bias, and Lopes' dividualizing bias, a society (respectively, networked, neo-tribal, or inter-communitarian) is emerging, *whose coexistence would exponentially diversify its members* in a historically unprecedented way. These authors converge in highlighting contemporaneity through the emergence of a sociability in which multiple collective and simultaneous belongings (opposing or related) come to define its members, and therefore tend towards their growing identity fragmentation ([4]).

[4]. For Castells, the temporal/spatial displacement caused by new information technologies has made the dimensions of local and global to be interactive, creating fractal subjects whose social relations include others never fully known. For Maffesoli (chapter 1), post-

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In this sense, the current course of european unification would also correspond to the emerging contemporary transversal sociability through *the permeabilization of the adhering nations by social relations that transcend them.* These are communitarian because they are legitimized by values that originate in their members. Still, they are different from classic communities with unique traditions because their two core values are also of (common) destiny: *peace* and european *diversity*, the only values cited in the 14 reasons in the European Union founding explanatory memorandum (EU, 2019b, p.3-4). *Originally*, the European Union community is distinct from other community traditions because of its *different origins* (the different national traditions in Europe), as communities *traditionally* refer to an indistinct past ([5]).

Also, as a *community of destiny or intent*, the European Union *de facto* assumes *the continuous diversification* of its members (both nations and citizens) *as its community purpose*, distinguishing itself even from any other intentional communities whose purpose is to promote the reiteration of similarities ([6]). Beyond the declarations made in the constitutive Treaties, the legislation formulated, and the cumulative accession (despite the United Kingdom's departure in 2016/18) of other European nations, since its foundation, the European Union has also consisted of the diversifying sociability of its members. It is a *diverse community* because differences in it define its members as such, both recognized and made so, as we can see in the multiple national belongings to varying degrees:

- by international transits within the bloc,
- by non-habitual national residents,
- by internal and external migration to the European Union.

The intrinsic (internal) *physical mobility of* the European Union, since its foundation, continues to evolve: Directive 2004/38/EC imposes operational revisions (CSES, 2017, p.5), recently due to bureaucratic problems detected for 7.2 million (of 19.9 million European citizens residing outside their country of origin) concerning the private sector, from 2014 to 2017 (CSES, 2017, p.95). The five options of *policies for* Member States, formulated to combine national security and physical mobility, have the aforementioned directive as their parameter and are reiterated by all 53 national authorities and agencies, and 69 civic, business, and academic non-governmental organizations surveyed (CSES, 2017, p.14). The *feedback* from the *key stakeholders of* generalized mobility (formulated by national authorities, the private sector, and citizens) also indicated a satisfactory consensus with the operational system for mobility, and concern that any adjustments needed are limited and progressive (CSES, 2017, p.182).

Non-habitual national residence by residents whose effective residence - successive or interpolated - is less than 300 days per year (Catarino and Esteves, 2020, p.22) is one of the main challenges to (national) taxation by globalization, as it dissolves its local factors in terms of the holder and the source of the income (Catarino and Esteves, 2020, p.5). Only in European countries can we find (until 2020) tax regimes for such residents, through exemptions, credits, or lower rates than in their home territories, admitting or attracting foreign pensioners, investors, or qualified professionals and based on international prohibitions on double taxation (Catarino and Esteves, 2020, p.18-21). From the European Union were Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Austria, Sweden, Luxembourg, Belgium, Ireland, Malta, the Netherlands and Denmark ([7]). In 2019, a similar proportion (13.3 million) resided outside the EU, with employment usually in capital citie, but with growing capillarity ([8]).

A general immigration policy, through alternative indirect reciprocity between the nations of the European Union (with mandatory reciprocity between them), established national quotas for refugees and external immigrants, particularly in the labor market, education, and social inclusion, where there is precariousness in the face of immigrants from within the bloc (EU, 2021).

Recently (4th October 2023), an agreement between the member states and within the Council that brings them together spelled out the alternative indirect reciprocity between all the components of the European Union, according to an internal solidarity mechanism (mandatory but flexible) for the destination of migrants and refugees: "all countries have to contribute but that contribution they can choose what to offer: relocation and assuming responsibility for people; capacity-building and other support; or a financial contribution" (EU, 2023).

modern lifestyles tend to shape urban communities woven together by multiple aesthetic affinities, which re-enchant our daily lives by making it intrinsically unstable. For Lopes (chapter 2), unlimited associativity has led to numerous collective belongings that divide modern individuality, leading us to assume identities whose subjective coordination is the daily challenge of contemporaneity.

5. In Tönnies' (1988, p.239) pioneering sociological formulation, community is a social context in which kinship, neighborhood, and values are shared, resulting in traditional solidarity referred to the mythical or real past.

6. Collective security is the only omnipresent aim in communities, whatever their shared values. (Bauman, 2003, p 50-52).

7. The United Kingdom and Switzerland – therefore, nations, respectively, previously, and indirectly involved in the European Union – were the only adopters of tax regimes for non-habitual residents outside the bloc (Catarino and Esteves, 2020, p.10).

8. Germany, Italy, Slovenia, Austria and Greece were nations with employability of other European citizens spread throughout the national territory (EU, 2021, p.90) and the risk of poverty with similar proportions among European citizens coming (29.1%) or not (20.7%) from another Member State (EU, 2021, p.91).

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In 2019, the European Union had 446.8 million inhabitants, 21.8 million of whom were not European citizens and whose risk of poverty (45.1%) was significantly higher than that of residents with european citizenship (EU, 2021) ([9]).

V. Towards European Associative Democracy

Parliamentary democracy is the highest form of authority in nations: "The individual [...] was born into political life. [...] And the whole of society has become, to some degree, the state, the sovereign political body; it is the totality of citizens. [...] However, it is the spontaneous work of generations that have extended [...] the sharing of sovereignty and direction (Mauss, 2017, p.80)". This model has also been adopted by the European Union in its Parliament, with ideological or programmatic benches that bring together nationally active parties (EU, 2016b, p.8).

But the democracy adopted by the European Union cannot be defined as merely parliamentary since even legislation is formulated by successive conciliations between Parliament and the Council on the initiative of the Commission. Strictly speaking, it tends towards a model of *associative democracy* whose principles turn associated interests into government managers, with the maximum distribution of public power under an uninterrupted flow of information between the governors and the governed. In this type of democracy, various associations (including lobbies, as long as they are open to the various interests in society), beyond to political parties, have guaranteed institutional insertion during the formulation of all public and social policies (Hirst, 1994).

This stems from the following associative characteristics of European democracy:

1. The tripartite legislative and budgetary configuration;
2. The plural commissioner structure of the European executive;
3. The advisory committees (of the Regions and Economic and Social Affairs);
4. The institutional permeability imperatively generalized to representative associations;
5. The european citizens' initiative to incite the Commission, by 1 million citizens in a minimum number of Member States;
6. The municipal eligibility of European citizens, *outside* their original nation, in the place where they reside and even the insertion or withdrawal from the European Union, by nations (EU, 2016a, p.8, p.10; EU, 2016b, p.9, p.10, p.11, p.31).

The trend towards european associative democracy, although still in progress, *became predominant with* the parliamentary resolution (Apr. 27, 2021) that made it imperative to register civil society that moves between European institutions, namely between Parliament, the Council (interministerial) and the Commission. By 645 votes (against five and with 49 abstentions), a large majority of MEPs opted to make any *lobbying* in the three European institutions conditional on the transparent accreditation of the interests represented. Registration systems that were as sparse as they were sporadic and operated between the Parliament and the Commission had been in place since 2011 without being mandatory (European Parliament, 2021).

The inter-institutional agreement between the Commission, Parliament, and the Council (European Parliament, 2021), whose parliamentary ratification led to the accreditation of interests within its scope, was also, as such, an increase in the associative-democratic trend, as interest representations are inherent in the national ministries and their respective social areas that make up the inter-ministerial Council. Since then, even if institutional improvements are still possible, in the future and in the same direction, an associative democracy is *already* the *European* democratic model.

In addition to being consistent with european diversity within the Union, this conclusion is further corroborated by the following points:

- Due to the exponential growth of registers from 2011 (when the registration systems maintained by the Parliament and the Commission were unified) until April 2021, including during and after the European Commission proposed (2016/2017) to make it mandatory to register associated interests with institutions directly linked to the general European interest (European Parliament, 2018, p.1);
- Until then, the European Parliament had only been compiling separate registers since 1995 (European Parliament, 2018, p.1);
- Although some european parliaments regulate *lobbying* in their nations, none adopted such a system or one similar to the one adopted in April by the European Union until June 2021 (European Parliament, 2018, p.6);
- Until the inter-institutional agreement and subsequent parliamentary ratification of the absolute accreditation of *lobbyists,* the (inter-ministerial) Council was a mere observer of the procedures relating to and operated solely by Parliament and the Commission (European Parliament, 2018, p.2);
- Public self-identification of associated interests with the European institutions was made compulsory for

[9]. Promoted immigration continues to fall far short of the European urgency, mainly due to the high average age (41.5 years in 2010) and fertility below replacement (1.4 per woman) of the population (EU, 2021, p.24).

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any activity within them, including the mere ability to speak in any institutional space of the European Union (European Parliament, 2018, p.2);

- In April 2021, the unified and (recently) compulsory registration system revealed 12,489 organizations, with 49,059 people, of which 1,594 had parliamentary access (European Parliament, 2018, p.3);
- 82.5% of the organizations were based in the European Union: Belgium (18.2%), Germany (13.3%), France (9.8%), Italy and Spain (6.5% each) were their main national headquarters, while European organizations outside the Union accounted for 11.8%, those based in the USA for 4% and there was little representation of interests in Asia and the Middle East (0.8%), Africa (0.4%), Latin America and the Caribbean (0.4%), and Oceania (European Parliament, 2018, p.3);
- Varying in size and interest, most of them specialized in the environment, research and innovation, and climate action: 27.2% were non-governmental organizations, platforms, and networks; 21.8% were companies; 21.2% were trade and business associations; 7.2% were trade union and professional associations; and 4.7% were scientific research institutions and *think tanks* (European Parliament, 2018, p.4) thus inherent in the European community's diversity;
- Annually, 67.17% of them spend less than 100,000 euros, 30.17% between 100,000 and 1 million euros, and 2.66% more than 1 million euros (European Parliament, 2018, p.5), showing that there is no inequality in civic access between different interests;
- From 2011 to 2021, the voice of associations grew by 63.2% for European interests, 53.8% for national interests, 42% for global interests, and 27.9% for regional or local interests (European Parliament, 2018, p.5), thus leading to *the* institutional dissemination of issues *inherent to the* (diverse) *European community.*

VI. Conclusion

A century ago, Mauss could say that "no modern nation has reached such a point of perfection that it can be said that its public life can no longer progress except under a new and superior form of society" (Mauss, 2017, p.292).

However, the collective integration that resulted in the European Union is no longer the one that is found in nations whose traditional direct reciprocity between each member does not promote their sociocultural differentiation (even when tolerant of it). From international relations through indirect reciprocity, in the european unification assumed since 1993, *a transversal society* emerges, both for the adhering nations and for the other subgroups of its members that are repeatedly differentiated.

In institutional terms, the European Union is neither a confederation nor a federation as known (Hamilton et al., 2003). Although the EU allows its member states to leave, just as in confederate nations, it is only allowed progressively and conditionally by both the whole and the other member states. Contains a unifying body, as occurs in federal nations (negligible in unitary nations), whose similarity to the federative Union is merely formal: while it overrides what is common to the federated member states, in the EU it is the body that guarantees european plurality *within* each member state.

Table 2 contrasts the supranational Union with other entities of equivalent planetary magnitude:

Table 2: Relationship between the whole and the parts in planetary authorities.

Whole x Parts	Institutional Exits	Internal supremacy
Confederation of nations	Free	Forbidden
Federal nation	Forbidden	From the common body
Unitary nation	Nonexistent	Nonexistent
Supranational union	Conditional	From the plural body

Source: Prepared by the author.

Since indirect reciprocities, especially alternative reciprocities between its member states, are absolutely distinct from direct reciprocities between individuals and nations (federal or unitary) or between them when they are confederated, the European Union corresponds to a society in which differentiation is incessant and cannot be contained by federative rigidity or confederative flexibility.

While the interface between the social totality and each member is direct reciprocity between homeland and citizens in the nation, indirect reciprocity (simple or alternative) governs community relations in the Union, promoting the cultural diversity of its members as their sub-groups are reciprocally articulated with each other (national, local or other associative, and even occasional), particularly for any projection of their interests into the unitary sphere. Instead of the relative cultural homogeneity promoted by the mere national adjudication of subgroups, the synthesis of which parliamentary democracy encourages or seeks, an associative democracy emerges as an egalitarian political formula for uniting differences through the European project.

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A recent inter-party manifesto called for an immediate halt to and progressive regression of the European integration that has already been achieved, and any new forms of social life based on supranational legality, understood as annulling national traditions in general (Le Pen, 2021). The initiative brought together 16 ultra-conservative parties: *Rassemblement National* (France), *Lega Norte (Italy)*, *Fratelli d'Italia* (Italy), *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (*Poland), *Fidesz (*Hungary), *Vox* (Spain), *Freiheitlich Partei Österreichs (*Austria), *Vlaams Belang* (Belgium), *Dansk Folkeparti (*Denmark), *Eesti Konservatiivne Rahvaerakond* (Estonia), *Perussuomalaiset (*Finland), *Lietuvos lenkų rinkimų akcija* (Lithuania), *Partidul Național Țărănesc Creștin Democrat (*Romania), *Ellinikí Lýsi (*Greece)*, Bălgarsko nacionalno dviženie (*Bulgaria) and Ja21 (Netherlands).

Europe's unification expansion, with its inherent supranational implications, also interferes in the Eurasian configuration as its adherence to the East of Europe grows. This geopolitical concern has already been expressed by the Russian leadership, indicating that it has guided its regional decisions (Taylor, 1999) and possibly even the invasion of Ukraine in 2022 (Pearson and McFaul, 2022).

However, the European Union is an institutional configuration and general sociability that *does not cancel out traditional differences* (particularly those of the different national traditions), *but adds others*, including intentional and contemporary *ones*. The process of *social diversification is reproduced and amplified, in* particular, by the adoption of an associative democracy in which civil society also permeates european public institutions.

This socio-cultural differentiation expresses the contemporaneity assumed by the International Convention (UNESCO, 2005) for the protection and promotion of diverse cultural expressions in any national culture. Although the document still relates to international diversity, it admits culturally plural nations: "reaffirming the sovereign right of States to preserve, adopt and implement the policies and measures they deem appropriate for the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions in their territory." In this sense, the article four assumes that nations themselves are intercultural: "Such expressions are transmitted between and within groups and societies" (UNESCO, 2005, p.13; Varin and Guèvremont, 2019; Pereira Ferreira, 2016).

Table 3 summarizes the thesis presented, contrasting nation and union as types of society:

Table 3: Brief analysis between nation and union as types of society.

Society	Structuring reciprocity	Community	Subgroups	Democracy
Nation	Direct between each and the whole	+Homogenizing the members	Subsumed into the whole	Cross-party parliamentary
Union	Indirect between each and third parties included	+Diversifying the members	Permeable to others	Associations of organized interests

Source: Prepared by the author.

The emerging society of international relations of indirect European reciprocity is a political as well as a social inflection of the economic globalization in which it emerged and achieved capillarity in all quadrants of the planet (EU, 2017) ([10]). In the same year, it was the only territory among the most populous with a life expectancy of around 80 years. In 2018, it was the only population (446 million, excluding the United Kingdom) among the G20 of more than 200 million inhabitants, with a medium population density (more than 100 ha/km^2), with the highest growth in digital inclusion (already high at 59% in 2008) to 82% in 2018, a period in which the euro supplanted other currencies, except the United Kingdom, in the G20 (EU, 2020, p.11, p.16, p.30, p.65).

In this sense, the eventual adoption of economic blocs that transcend mere commercial amalgamations, like Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) ([11]) which tries to bring together more nations than the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) ([12]) or take on diverse communities in other regions of the planet, like recent African Union (AU) ([13]), would entail the same challenging sociability of the nations that integrate them. Their supranational endeavors on other continents and

[10]. The European Union is globalized in goods, services, and direct investments. In 2017, preferential trade agreements were in place or under negotiation with more than 90% of Africa and North and South America, while free trade agreements were being negotiated with the central economic zones of Asia and Oceania. Its customs reached Turkey, Norway, Andorra, Lichtenstein, Iceland, San Marino, and Monaco (EU, 2017, p.9, p.13).

[11] Available at: https://celacinternational.org/
[12] Available at: https://www.mercosur.int/
[13] Available at: https://au.int/

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their articulation with other established community blocs (such as the pioneering European bloc) depend on the unity of continental diversities, even if a future global union of humanity is no longer merely utopian.

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