
Political Integration without Warfare

Herbert Barry III

University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Robert L. Carneiro correctly demonstrates that government over multiple communities most often begins by conquest or threat of conquest. One independent community usually wages successful wars of conquest against adjacent communities. Sometimes independent communities unite because a nearby government over multiple communities threatens to attack and subjugate them. Circumscription, a term originated by Carneiro in 1970, facilitates government of multiple communities by a paramount chief or small state. Communities are less able to remain independent if their environment is restricted or their resources are inadequate.

Contrary to Carneiro's assumption that external warfare is normally constant among independent communities is information in an article by Carol R. Ember and Melvin Ember (1992) *Warfare, Aggression, and Resource Problems: Cross-Cultural Codes*. In a world sample of 186 societies, 105 with a score on frequency of external warfare had definitely or probably not been pacified. The average proportion of maximum frequency was 52 per cent for 42 independent communities, 61 per cent for 25 communities with one level of higher government, 71 per cent for 14 communities with two higher levels and also 71 per cent for 24 communities with three or more higher levels.

Henri J. M. Claessen, in his article *On Chiefs and Chiefdoms* (Claessen 2011), stated that independent communities usually have a hereditary leader with spiritual power. The chief and members of an independent community therefore resist subordination under a higher government level. Democratic government and election of the leaders, which occur in some independent communities, may increase the likelihood of peaceful, consensual union with other communities.

Human beings have great ability to form cohesive communities that endure for many generations. Members of other communities are usually regarded as aliens or enemies. Warfare among communities therefore is a tendency, but it is not universal. If the members of other communities are correctly regarded as cousins, descended from a common ancestral community, higher levels of government can develop peacefully.

Carneiro described favorable conditions for development of a small state by conquest. Favorable conditions also can be described for peaceful integration of independent communities into a higher level of government. If the nearby communities have differentiated from a common ancestral community less than a thousand years ago, they usually share the same language and the same spiritual beliefs. Intermarriage fosters solidarity among the communities, especially if they have matrilineal kinship. Ample natural resources diminish the need for competition and warfare. Technological advancement, trade, visits, and communications are further favorable conditions for peaceful integration.

The favorable conditions for peaceful change to higher government levels apply to the contemporary physical and social environment. Inauguration of the worldwide United Nations in 1945, before the end of World War II, was an approach toward world government. The more recent European Common Market is another higher government level for nations that in the past frequently warred against each other.

The approximately 200,000 years of our species include many occasions when a group of community members moved away and formed a new community. These dispersions usually occurred during high birth rate with an abundance of resources and available territory. New communities alternate with combinations of adjacent communities, which sometimes form a higher level of government. Political integration can be adaptive and consensual. Warfare and conquest are destructive and prominent interventions that may be exaggerated in historical records and in the archeological evidence.

Government above the community sometimes begins with a voluntary confederation among independent communities. Several examples are described by D. Blair Gibson in his article *Chiefdom Confederacies and State Origins* (Gibson 2011). Page 224 contains the following conclusion: 'In their very constitution,

chiefdom confederacies would seem to have embodied a mixture of coercion and volunteerism'. Examples were the ancient Celts, Germans, and Greeks.

An especially interesting example is the Iroquois League, which was characterized by Gibson as a confederacy of tribes rather than of chiefdoms. Five tribes, the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas, maintained the league for multiple centuries. The Tuscaroras later became the sixth member. This league, which occupied most of the future New York State, has been described as an influential and beneficial model for the federal government created in 1789 by 13 British colonies on the eastern seaboard of North America. The Iroquois League and its culture soon afterward were overwhelmed by the immigrants from Europe.

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