



Relationship between empires and cultural assimilation

S Berny*

Department of Economics, University of Groningen, Groningen, The Netherlands

*Corresponding author. E-mail: berny@654.com

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DESCRIPTION

Assimilation has been, over the centuries, one of the major ways of conceptualizing the relationship between center and periphery within imperial systems. It can be characterized as an effort to fit conquered or colonial territory and populations into the political, sociocultural, and frequently economic mould of the invading power, using force if necessary. Since Roman times, assimilation has been used for political, military, religious, and/or cultural purposes. The Spanish, Portuguese, and French Empires, as well as the British Empire, frequently put assimilation at the heart of their colonial policies (especially for legal matters). Examples of cultural or religious assimilation practiced by non-European powers include the early Muslim conquest of the Mediterranean or the Japanese integration of the Korean peninsula. Cultural assimilation is the process by which a minority group or culture becomes more similar to a society's dominant group or adopts, wholly or partially, the values, habits, and beliefs of another group. Full assimilation is the most common sort of cultural assimilation because it happens naturally, while forced assimilation occurs under certain circumstances. Minority groups are expected to assimilate into the norms of the dominant culture through language and appearance as well as more important socioeconomic variables like integration into the local society and workforce.

While some forms of cultural assimilation, such as cultural integration, are more common in multicultural communities, involve a minority group within a given society adopting aspects of the dominant culture through either cultural diffusion or outright assimilation, other forms of cultural assimilation, such as acculturation, involve a minority group completely assimilate into the dominant culture. While one perspective compares cultural assimilation to acculturation, another simply views the former as a stage of the latter. There have been many distinct types of cultural integration throughout history, including involuntary assimilation and

voluntary assimilation. Assimilation can also take the form of so-called additive acculturation, in which a person broadens their cultural horizons rather than replacing their ancestry.

Comparatively speaking to modern bureaucratic governments, which have only been around for a few decades, empires have been the primary type of large-scale political organization for at least two millennia. Sociologists have studied empires and colonies for as long as sociology has been an academic topic, beginning with Auguste Comte in the early 19th century and the academic discipline's founders in Europe and the United States in the late 19th century, and continuing until the present. Empires faded from sociological imagination between the 1970s and the end of the 20th century, but they have powerfully reemerged since then as a component of the closely related fields of "empire studies," "colonial studies," and "postcolonial studies." This resurgence of interest in empires corresponds in part to events in the real world, such as the fall of the Soviet Union and the resurgence of a fortified "American empire" and US military interventions abroad. The revisionist histories of the British and French colonial empires and Nazi Germany, the creation of global history, and theoretical advancements like postcolonial theory and subaltern studies have all contributed to the imperial and colonial turn in study. Even if academics are constantly willing to declare that competing schools and trends are obsolete or were never more than fads, these actions have not been able to halt the expansion of imperial and colonial studies. This unwavering passion is consistent with the strength of the empirical and analytical work as well as the significance of the analysis's study subjects in the real world. Both colonialism and imperialism are included in the idea of an empire. Empires are large, armed, multinational political entities that impose restrictions on the sovereignty of the polities in their vicinity. In colonialism, the conquered polities or populations are constituted as inferior to their

occupiers inferior in legal, administrative, social, and cultural terms rather than just being ruled over by foreign conquerors. Imperialism entails gaining political power over other countries without annexing any territory or assuming their sovereignty. The study of the state, political dominance, geopolitics/political geography, international relations, indigenous peoples, and the historiography of particular empires and colonies all have

connections to the sociological study of empires. It has connections to fields including political science, anthropology, and cultural studies. Several schools of social and cultural study, such as postcolonial theory and world-system theory, include empire as a fundamental theme. There is sociological research on empires in many academic subfields.