The economic causes of war

Loria Achille
THE ECONOMIC CAUSES OF WAR

By ACHILLE LORIA
of the University of Turin
Translated by JOHN LESLIE GARNER

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I
Economic relations give rise to an international jural organization .......................... 7

CHAPTER II
Economic relations destroy the international jural organization ............................... 48

CHAPTER III
Economic relations restore the international jural organization in part ...................... 73

CHAPTER IV
Economic relations restore the international jural organization in its entirety ............ 87

CHAPTER V
Later tendencies .................................. 126

CHAPTER VI
The lessons of the great war ...................... 163
Bibliography ................................. 183
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CHAPTER I.

ECONOMIC RELATIONS GIVE RISE TO AN INTERNATIONAL JURIDICAL ORGANIZATION.

According to economists there existed at one time a primitive, idyllic stage of society when the labors of isolated producers sufficed to supply their needs. There is no reason to doubt that such a condition of affairs actually did obtain, although no traces of it now remain to us. In any event, however, this condition could have prevailed only during the early infancy of humanity, and at a time when population was extremely sparse. For, as soon as the increasing population, finding itself compelled to use lands of comparatively limited fertility, extended the

*In view of the fact that the present conflict has so generally confirmed Professor Loria's theories regarding the economic causes and aspects of war as laid down in his striking work: Les Bases Économiques de la Justice Internationale [the title of which has been changed in the translation to The Economic Causes of War], which was published by the Nobel Institute in 1912, his views cannot fail to impress the reader as prophetic. In a supplemental chapter (Chapter VI), written in the fall of 1916, the author calls attention to certain phases in the war's development which obviously confirm his theories, and also to other details which seem to refute them—a refutation, it should be noted, which is only one in appearance.—Translator.
cultivation of the soil beyond the most productive zone, the labors of the isolated workers were found to be incapable of satisfying their needs, and it became necessary to organize an association of labor, or, in other words, to co-ordinate the efforts of a number of producers, for a common purpose, and this necessity soon became absolutely imperative.

A striking fact now presents itself. The workers, thus forced to associate in the labor of production, did not necessarily belong to one and the same political and social group; on the contrary, the very composition of primitive societies compelled men, originally belonging to different tribes, to unite for the purpose of a common production. This peculiar circumstance was due to two fundamental institutions of primitive humanity, the matriarchate and exogamy, the former of which made the woman the nucleus of the family as well as its governor, while the second compelled her to take her mate from without her own tribe. It therefore follows that the family group, within which the association of labor first arose, was composed, on the one hand, of a number of women belonging to the same tribe, or to the same matriarchal nucleus, and, on the other, of a number of men—their husbands—who were members originally,
of one or several, matriarchal nuclei necessarily different from that of their mates. Thus prehistoric social and domestic institutions brought together in one field, or within the confines of a comparatively limited territory, a number of men and women who belonged to several different family groups and who, consequently, thenceforth constituted so many distinct political entities. Thereupon the individuals composing these political groups, working together in a restricted territory, were compelled to establish numerous and very complex relations among themselves; and, as none of the co-producers could impose his own family, tribal or national law upon the others, they were forced to create a body of higher laws to regulate those relations, which were beyond the control of the laws of the separate groups. The laws thus originated constitute the embryo of international law, which, therefore, is a corollary of the association of labor, or, in other words, an effect of the organic conditions of production, that is, of economics.

This state of affairs, however, came to an end when the paternal family form appeared. For, rendering the man the nucleus of the family, as well as the chief producer, and compelling the absorption of the woman in the family of the