

Outline of Modern State System

1. State system
2. History
3. Features
4. Evolution

1. State System

It is a pattern of political life in which people are separately organized into sovereign states that interact with one another.

Nation-state System

A nation denotes a common ethnic and cultural identity shared by a single people, while a state is a political unit with a governance system controlling a territory and its inhabitants. The nation promotes emotional relationship amongst its members, while states provide political and legal foundation for the identity of its citizens. The term nation-state has been used by social scientists to denote the gradual fusion of cultural and political boundaries after a long control of political authority by a central government. The nation-state plays a dominant role in international relations. While governments come and go, a state has more permanence. Students and scholars of international relations can depend upon the continued existence of a state as a viable political entity.

State

Group of people those occupying a definite territory and politically organized under one government.

2. History

The Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 created the modern nation-state. The treaty established the principle of internal sovereignty (preeminence of rulers from other claimants to power) and external sovereignty (independence from outside powers).

England, Spain and France obtained independence from dominance by the Holy Roman Empire. It is often said that the Peace of Westphalia initiated the modern fashion of diplomacy as it marked the beginning of the modern system of nation states. Subsequent wars were not about issues of religion, but rather revolved around issues of state. This allowed Catholic and Protestant Powers to ally, leading to a number of major realignments.

Another important result of the treaty was it laid rest to the idea of the Holy Roman Empire having secular dominion over the entire Christian world. The nation-state would be the highest level of government, subservient to no others.

Scholars like Machiavelli, Bodin and Grotius defended the authority of the state and provided justification for the secular state independent from the authority of the Pope. There are three approaches to studying the social-cultural, political and economic forces at work within different nation-states.

3. Features

1. *Sovereignty*: Sovereignty can be understood to be “the legal theory that gives the state unique and virtually unlimited authority in all domestic matters and in its relations with other states”
2. *Nationalism*: Nationalism is taken to refer to that psychological or spiritual quality which, unites the people of a state and gives them the will to champion what they regard as their national interests.
3. *National Power*: National power on the other hand is the might of a state, providing the capabilities for getting done what the state wants accomplished

4. Further Evolution of State System

1. Rise of representative government
2. The industrial revolution
3. Population explosion
4. Independence of developing countries
5. Economic growth
6. Multilateral Organizations.