

## **MJC7, SEMESTER 4**

### **How International State System Emerged Worldwide and in India**

The international state system has its roots in the 17th century, emerging from the ashes of the medieval system. This transformation was a result of various factors, including the decline of feudalism, the rise of nationalism, and the Treaty of Westphalia. In this essay, we will explore how the international state system emerged worldwide and in India.

## **The Medieval System (9th-15th centuries)**

During the medieval period, the international system was characterized by a hierarchical structure, with the Pope and the Holy Roman Emperor holding supreme authority. The system was decentralized, with power distributed among various feudal lords, kings, and emperors. The concept of sovereignty was non-existent, and the idea of a nation-state was still in its infancy.

## **The Decline of Feudalism (15th-17th centuries)**

The decline of feudalism marked the beginning of the end of the medieval system. As trade and commerce expanded, the power of the feudal lords began to wane. The rise of strong monarchies in Europe, such as France and England, further eroded the feudal system. The monarchs began to centralize power, creating a more hierarchical system with the king at the apex.

In India, the decline of feudalism was evident in the rise of the Mughal Empire, which centralized power and created a more hierarchical system. The Mughal Empire's expansion and consolidation of power led to the

decline of smaller kingdoms and feudal lords.

## **The Rise of Nationalism (16th-17th centuries)**

Nationalism played a significant role in the emergence of the international state system. As people began to identify themselves with their nation rather than their feudal lord or the Church, the concept of a nation-state began to take shape. Nationalism created a sense of unity and purpose among people, which in turn led to the creation of strong, centralized states.

In India, the rise of nationalism was evident in the Indian independence movement, which sought to create a unified Indian state. The movement, led by figures such as Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, emphasized the importance of Indian identity and the need for self-rule.

## **The Treaty of Westphalia (1648)**

The Treaty of Westphalia marked the official beginning of the international state system. The treaty, signed in 1648, brought an end to the Thirty Years' War and established the principle of sovereignty, where each state had

supreme authority within its territory. The treaty also recognized the equality of states, regardless of their size or power, and established the concept of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states.

In India, the concept of sovereignty was established with the adoption of the Indian Constitution in 1950, which declared India to be a sovereign, democratic, republic.

## **Key Features of the International State System**

The international state system that emerged in the 17th century had several key features:

## 1. Sovereignty:

Each state had supreme authority within its territory.

## 2. Equality:

All states were recognized as equal, regardless of their size or power.

## 3. Non-interference:

States were expected to refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of other states.

## 4. Territoriality:

States were defined by their territorial boundaries.

## 5. Anarchy:

The international system was characterized by anarchy, with no central authority to enforce laws or maintain order.

In India, these features are reflected in the country's relations with other states. India recognizes the sovereignty and equality of other states, and expects the same in return. India also respects the territorial boundaries of other states and refrains from interfering in their internal affairs.

## **Conclusion**

The emergence of the international state system was a result of various factors, including the decline of feudalism, the rise of nationalism, and the Treaty of Westphalia. The system that emerged had several



key features, including sovereignty, equality, non-interference, territoriality, and anarchy.

Understanding the origins and development of the international state system is essential for grasping the complexities of international relations in the modern era. In India, the international state system has evolved over time, with the country recognizing the sovereignty and equality of other states and respecting their territorial boundaries.