

Sovereign State System in the Era of Globalisation: An Appraisal

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Abstract : This paper attempts to explore the notion of sovereign state system, its emergence and legitimization by the treaty of Westphalia, 1648 in Europe and examines how the very notion of sovereign state is subject to changes in the later part of the 20th century both politically and economically in the wake of globalisation. The paper firstly traces the tradition of Westphalian sovereign state system which influenced the dominant understanding about sovereign state system till mid 20th century. Secondly, it explores how the notion of sovereign nation state is subjected to change in the post World War II specially in the context of universal acceptance of human rights and right to intervene in internal affairs of a sovereign state to protect the same, the decolonization and legitimization of the principle of self determination and through the experience of European Integration. Thirdly, it analyses how globalisation drives certain fundamental changes and poses challenges to the sovereign state system. The concluding part of the paper argues that sovereign state system is relevant and will continue to be relevant although it needs to redefine its role in the changing global environment.

Keywords : Westphalia, sovereignty, nation-state system, intervention, globalisation

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