

H. Spruyt, "International Selection in International Relations: State Anarchy as Order", International Organizations (Autumn, 1994)

- sovereign territorial state has prevailed because it proved more effective at preventing defection by its members, reducing internal transaction costs, and making credible commitments to other units; the specific internal makeup of state units created a structure that delegitimized other possibilities of structure, with sovereign gov't working as a gatekeeper in determining what an int'l actor was
- how?
  1. competitive institutional efficacy: sovereign rulers were better at centralizing jurisdiction and authority, and hence better at preventing free riding, rationalizing economies, and standardizing units of exchange
  2. sovereign territoriality, when recognized by other actors, acted to structure interunit behavior: sovereign states could more credibly commit members of their organization, their internal hierarchies provided rulers with focal points with which to regularize crossborder interactions, and their parameters of authority were determined specifically by territorial boundaries, with each state being de jure equivalent
  3. once the benefits of internal centralization and the ability of rulers to engage in longer-term commitments became apparent, everybody else imitated
- other methods of authority failed
  - resurrection of Roman Empire and attempts to build a Christian theocracy had internal hierarchy but lacked territorial specifications; they were also unsuitable for an emerging capitalist environment, and lacked written codes, customary proceedings, and instrumentally rational procedures necessary for a legal climate favorable for trade; lack of common coinage and units of measurement made transaction costs high
  - city-leagues lacked both territorial contiguity and fixed borders with a clear sovereign, and city-states lacked clear internal hierarchy (although it had territorial limits)
  - the modern state, on the other hand, had the critical feature of sovereignty- the principle that authority is limited by precise spatial terms and is subject to no other authority
- sovereign states are still dominant because they create predictability and regularity in domestic economics and international relations, allowing states to play iterative games with common rules