



S.A.S. GOVERNMENT DEGREE COLLEGE, NARAYANAPURAM,

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(AFFILIATED TO ADIKAVI NANNAYA UNIVERSITY, RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM)

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1	2019-20	02-02-2019	D.MALLESWARA RAO	Social Contract Theory	SVRK.Govt.Degree College(M)Nidadavolu
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Name of the Activity: Guest Lecture

Name of the Speaker: D. Malleswara Rao

Date of the programme: 02-02-2019

Topic of the Guest Lecture: SOCIAL CONTRACT THEORY

Venue: III BA Class Room

Name of the College: SVRK.Govt. Degree College(M)Nidadavolu

Located the College: Nidadavolu

No. of Students participated:35

Brief History of the Social Contract Theory:-

Social contract theory is a philosophical concept that seeks to explain the origins and legitimacy of political authority and the formation of societies. It suggests that individuals come together to form a society and agree to abide by certain rules and norms in exchange for protection, security, and the preservation of their natural rights.

The basic idea behind social contract theory can be traced back to thinkers such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, among others. Each of these philosophers presented variations on the theme, but the core concept remains similar.

Thomas Hobbes: In his work "Leviathan" (1651), Hobbes argued that in a state of nature, human life would be "nasty, brutish, and short." To avoid this, individuals agree to give up some of their freedoms and submit to the authority of a sovereign ruler in exchange for security and protection.

John Locke: Locke's version of social contract theory, articulated in works like "Two Treatises of Government" (1689), posits that individuals in the state of nature have natural rights to life, liberty, and property. They come together to form a government to protect these rights, and if the government fails in its duty, the people have the right to overthrow it.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Rousseau's conception of the social contract, presented in "The Social Contract" (1762), emphasizes the idea of the general will. According to Rousseau, individuals must come together to form a society based on the general will, which represents the common good of the community. In this view, the legitimacy of government derives from its adherence to the general will.

Social contract theory has been influential in the development of modern political thought and has been used to justify various forms of government and political systems. It provides a framework for understanding the relationship between individuals and the state, as well as the obligations and rights that exist within society. However, it is also a subject of debate and criticism, particularly regarding the nature of the hypothetical state of nature and the extent to which individuals actually consent to the social contract.

Social contract theory Outcomes:-

Social contract theory has had various outcomes and implications throughout history, influencing political systems, social structures, and legal frameworks. Some of the key outcomes include:

Formation of Governments: Social contract theory has provided a theoretical basis for the formation of governments and political authority. It suggests that legitimate political authority arises from the consent of the governed, leading to the establishment of democratic systems where rulers derive their power from the consent of the governed.

Individual Rights: Social contract theory emphasizes the importance of individual rights and freedoms. It suggests that individuals have inherent rights, such as life, liberty, and property, which should be protected by the government. This has led to the development of legal systems that prioritize individual rights and liberties.

Limitation of Government Power: Social contract theory also serves as a justification for limiting the power of governments. According to this theory, governments are formed to serve the interests of the people and should not exceed their authority or infringe upon the rights of individuals. This has led to the establishment of systems of checks and balances and the rule of law to prevent government abuse of power.

Social Stability and Order: By establishing rules and norms that govern behavior within society, social contract theory contributes to social stability and order. It provides a framework for resolving conflicts and disputes through legal mechanisms and promotes cooperation and mutual respect among members of society.

Political Revolutions: Social contract theory has played a significant role in inspiring political revolutions and movements for social change. When governments fail to uphold their end of the social contract by violating the rights of citizens or acting against the common good, people may feel justified in rebelling against such governments to establish new social contracts.

Critique and Debate: Social contract theory has sparked ongoing debate and critique regarding its validity and applicability. Critics argue about the nature of the hypothetical social contract, the extent to which individuals actually consent to it, and its implications for various social groups. These discussions have contributed to the development of alternative political theories and perspectives.

Overall, the outcomes of social contract theory have shaped modern political and legal systems, emphasizing the importance of individual rights, democratic governance, and the rule of law in maintaining just and equitable societies.

THANK YOU