

Abstract: Social contract as a rational choice

The thesis is intended to be an introduction into contemporary social contract theories which are elaborated within the methodological framework of the rational choice theory. John Rawls' book *A Theory of Justice* is a seminal work in this field. The thesis, however, does focus not only on the approach adopted by Rawls, but on the theories of other authors as well – that of J. Buchanan, D. Gauthier, T. Scanlon and R. Nozick. These remain quite unknown in the Czech context. The structure of the thesis should allow for a comparison between the respective theories as the author starts with the object of the social contract, proceeds to the parties to the contract and, finally, to its content. Special attention is devoted to the game theory which models some of the typical interpersonal interactions and, using its theoretical apparatus, can illustrate problems of social cooperation – the key theme of virtually all social contract theories. Following Schelling's theory of focal points an expressive theory of law is discussed. In the next part of the thesis the author illustrates mechanisms of maintaining of social order with the help of latest empirical studies. Eventually, the author tries to outline the way analytic philosophy views the social contract as a system of institutions. In its eyes, the social contract is a necessary implication of the existence of language. The thesis looks into the basic components of J. Searle's theory of institutional reality.