Introduction

Laws pertaining to crime and punishment in a just society were created to protect the people's rights under the social contract. Biblical laws of the past have been modified into the non-biblical laws we have today. Non-biblical laws established under the social contract theory had religious origins, but were changed to ensure that they benefited everyone without religious biases and/or prejudices. We have explored which laws are more likely to last and the ones that the future generation will just read about in textbooks.

Central Outline

Social Contract Theory

All societies should have a single set of rules. Without a set system, all people do things for themselves without consideration for others.

Plato’s Republic

"Is justice sufficient for faring well?"

Whether or not one is known to be this kind of person, or to do injustice or to be unjust, if one is not brought to justice or becomes better by punishment.

Biblical Laws

Hammurabi code

"An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth."

Justinian Code

"Innocent until proven guilty"

Non-Biblical Laws

Abolition of Slavery

no person shall be forced into hard labor for any reason.

Utilitarianism

Greatest Happiness Principle

The idea that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote the greatest amount of happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure, and the absence of pain; by unhappiness [is intended] pain, and the privation of pleasure."

Discussion

• Hammurabi Code
  - Retribution
  - No exceptions to the rule
• Justinian Code
  - Fair trial
  - Lack of evidence can allow guilty to walk free
• Abolition of Slavery
  - All people are treated equally

Conclusions

Laws that protect the people’s rights are hard to achieve due to the fact that there will always be a law that will exclude a group of individuals. Future laws will constantly change as well because societies and people are not perfect. So the overall idea of a perfect society is a metaphor of change which will never really end.

References

